

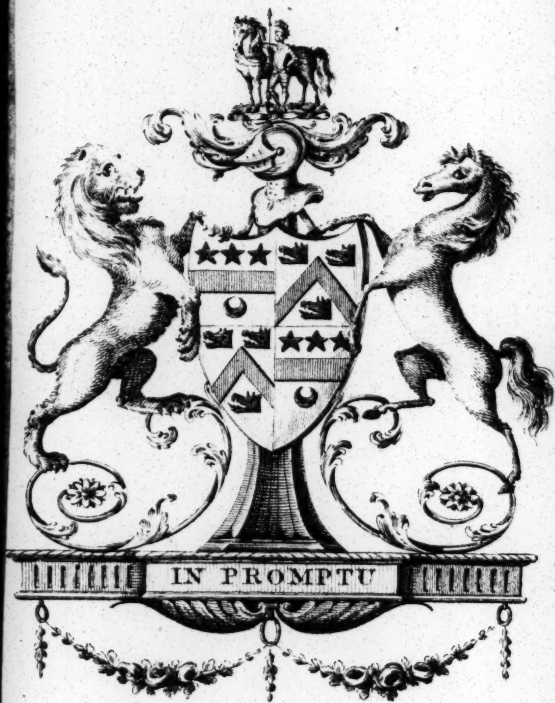


An  
**INTRODUCTION**  
to a Devout Life.

By  
FRANCIS SALES  
Bishop of Geneva.



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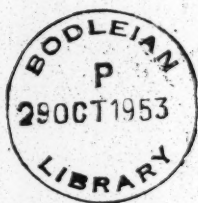






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A  
DEDICATORY PRAYER  
of the AUTHOR.

O Sweet Jesus, my Lord, my Saviour,  
and my God: behold me here prostrate be-  
fore thy divine Majesty, vowing and conse-  
crating this work to thy glory: quicken the  
words thereof by thy blessing, that those  
souls for whom I have made it, may thereby  
receive the sacred inspiration I wish them:  
and particularly that, of imploring for me  
thy infinite mercy; to the end, that while I  
shew others the way of Devotion in this  
world, I my self may not be rejected and  
confounded in the other: but that with them  
I may for ever sing for a song of triumph,  
the word, which from my heart I pronounce  
in testimony of my fidelity, amongst the ha-  
zards of this mortall life, Live Jesus, Live  
Jesus: Yea Lord Jesus, Live and reign  
in our hearts for ever. Amen.





A

## SUMMARY OF THE AUTHOURS LIFE.

**H**EAVEN made a rich present to the world, upon Thursday the sixth of August in the year 1567. the birth-day of Blessed Francis de Sales. His Father was Francis de Sales, and his mother Frances de Sionnas, both of them eminent in virtue and blood. He was borne in his seventh moneth : and by reason of this advancement of time, was so tender, that he was kept the first year wrapped in cotton, and the Nurses were not suffered to touch him with their hands ; an argument of his future chastity. The place of his birth was a chamber, dedicated to the name and devotion of S. Francis of Assize , and therefore he was called Francis. He was admirably fair ; his face so sweet , his countenance so lovely, and his behaviour so modest, that the sight of him raised a meditation of the beauty of an Angel. The first impression which was given him , was the fear of Sinne, and the love of Virtue; whereof his soul was so capable, that from his infancy his good inclinations were apparent.

parent. His fathers house was not the onely  
theatre of his virtues : when he was of age  
to go from thence, he was sent to the Col-  
ledge of Annessy, and from thence to Paris,  
to the Colledge of Clermont, under the  
Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus.  
These two Colledges were Academies to  
this blessed man, where he gained, equally  
learning and virtue: learning, by the good-  
ness of his wit, wherein he excelled others,  
and by the force of his judgement, which  
was already ripe ; Virtue, by a particular  
affection which he had to devotion, and  
frequenting the Churches. His best recre-  
ation being in reading good books, in hear-  
ing devout sermons, and in reciting the  
crown of our B. Lady, and devoutly medi-  
tating those holy mysteries. The managing  
of time is a stumbling block to youth, yet  
he husbanded his so well, that he soon be-  
came capable of deep learning ; which ob-  
liged his parents to call him from Paris,  
and to send him to Padua ; under the go-  
vernment of Mons. Deage, Doctour in Di-  
vinity, to study the laws: wherein he made  
such progresse, that at the age of three or  
four and twenty years, he proceeded Do-  
ctour with the generall applause of 28  
Doctours, who knew not which to admire  
in him most, the subtilty of his wit, or his  
rare virtue, and piety. His heart was too

much accustomed to devotion, to forget to give God thanks for the good successe of his studies. He went for that purpose to our Lady of Loretto, from thence to Rome to visit the holy places, and render his thanks more acceptable. This voyage being finished, and he returned into Savoy, his father, who knew not that God had chosen this his sonne to labour for his glory, intended to put him to the Parliament at Chambery, to be received there; resolving at his return to procure him some honourable imployment in the world. But heaven opposed this; shewing by an extraordinary accident, that it consented not to this design: for in his return from Chambery, his horse threw him, yet without hurt, and in the fall, the hanger of his sword being loosened from the girdle, fell to the ground; the sword also falling out of the scabbard, lay upon it in the form of a cross: of which this young Cavalier taking no notice, got up again on his horse: but a while after, his horse stumbling, his sword fell the second time in the same form of a Crosse upon his scabbard. He made then some reflection upon this holy figure; but at last the same accident happening the third time, he turned to Mons<sup>r</sup>. Deage his Governour, and said, with a smiling countenance: *I see Sir that God calls me to follow*

*low the way of his Crosse, I must obey him.*  
A discourse then very short, but vigorous,  
and lasting in his practise. For from that  
moment the heart of this B. man became  
so in love with the holy Crucifixe, that he  
desired nothing but the Cross. And because  
he well knew that the holy Ghost loves not  
these languishing desires ; he endeavoured  
speedily to put himself into the way to fol-  
low Jesus Christ in the Ecclesiastical state.  
He then discovered his desire to his Parents,  
and in all humility begged their consent :  
which having obtained, he instantly took  
the cassock, and by this new habit con-  
firmed his mind in the contempt of the  
world, rendred himself more serious in  
the service of God, more faithfull and zea-  
lous in the honour of his glory, and all at  
once took the lesser orders, and the first of  
the holy ones. Now as it belongs to none  
but Apostolicall men ( whose virtue is un-  
questionable, and knowledge profound )  
to labour in the conversion of Hereticks,  
our young Church-man being yet but a  
Deacon, employed himself so fervently  
therein, as well by his learned sermons, as  
by his Catechisms, and charitable confe-  
rences ; that from that time it was judged,  
that he was born for high employments :  
which was the cause that the Provost-ship  
of the Cathedrall Church of Geneva was

given him, with expresse commission, to root Heresie out of the countreys of Chablais, Gaillard, and Ternier. He that will know the worth of a man, must employ him. It was in this work that the zeal and virtue of this holy man appeared very clear; for he spent the dayes in preaching, and catechising these seduced souls; and the nights in imploring their conversion by his prayers and penances. He was seen attentive in instructing sometimes a little child, sometimes a poore maid servant. In giving spirituall refection to others, he forgot to take corporall nourishment to himself, and lost half his sleep by the frequent conferences he had with hereticks. It cannot be exprest how happily this poore land was manured by the care and vigilancy of this Apostolicall man, nor how plentifully Heaven poured its blessing upon his labours. It is enough to say, that in lesse then two or three years, he extirpated almost out of the whole Countrey, that heresy, which in threescore and ten years had taken deep root there. Now as so great a talent well managed could not but draw to it occasions of great merit; Monseigr. de Grenier Bishop of Geneva, upon a certain knowledge which he had of his virtue and abilities, chose him for his Coadjutor, and obteyned approbation of  
the

the choise at Rome by Pope Clement the  
eight, and a little after our holy man was  
consecrated Bishop of Geneva. There  
wanted no testimony from heaven to make  
appear that this choise was accepted there :  
for during the Consecration ( according to  
the relation of this great Prelate ) he ima-  
gined that he did intellectuallly see the ho-  
ly Trinity working that inwardly in him,  
which the Bishops performed outwardly :  
and that the glorious Virgin accompanied  
by S. Peter and S. Paul took him into pro-  
tection. This vision, more then sufficient  
to induce this great Prelate to give himself  
entirely to God, was seconded by an other  
favour which seemed to him so pleasant ,  
that it held him wholly employed in the  
contemplation of his divine Majesty the  
space of fix weeks, imprinting in his heart  
so great a respect and reverence to Episco-  
pall dignity, that he honoured it even to the  
least Pontificall ornaments. And to acquit  
himself worthily of this charge , which  
seemed burthensome to him, by reason of  
the souls which he had to direct ; he resol-  
ved to take for his pattern S. Charls Bor-  
romeus ; beginning after his example to re-  
form the Clergy, to resettle the Ecclesiasti-  
call estate in its former fervour and piety,  
to furnish Ecclesiastical Benefices with fit  
persons, & to compose a particular Rituall.

From Ecclesiasticall he passed to Lay- persons, and laboured so powerfully in reforming their manners, by his preaching, and particularly by the instructions he gave them in confession, that this people of Geneva became altogether changed. But it was too little for his zeal to have onely Savoy to preach in: Paris must also hear his voice. He preached there to the great satisfaction of all, and with such successe, that King Henry the fourth desired to stay him in France, promising him a better Bishoprick then that of Geneva. But our holy man, who had no affection to those honours, and advantages, would not break his faith which he had given to his first Spouse. Which was the cause that parting from Paris, he returned home, and employed himself more fervently then ever to encrease the glory of God, and instruct such persons as had formerly little profited. From the care of the perfection of worldly people, he went forward to the instruction of Religious persons, and founded the Order of the Nuns of the visitation, whose meeknesse, piety, and charity, revive in these times the spirit and memory of their Founder. He received commandment from the Pope, to compose the Rules of this new Order; which he did so prudently, that he might easily be judged the organ and instrument.

strument of the holy Ghost designed for the establishment of an Order so honourable to the Church of God. The constitutions being framed, he took particular care of this order, and from the very beginning sowed such good seeds by his pious writings and devout discourses, that from them he saw grow up fruits capable of a perfect sanctity. It is very easie to judge by these Apostolicall actions, the eminent degree of perfection to which his soul was raised. The love of God possesst him so entirely, that if one grain of affection towards the world had been mingled with it, he *would rather have torn out his very heart*, then have endured it. The love of his neighbour made him keep a list of all the bashfull poore people of the town, whom he relieved secretly: and this same love gave him a will to dye for the salvation of all those of his Diocese. His affection to holy poverty was so great, that in imitation of S. Charles Boromeus, he wore one suit of clothes more then nine years, and chose for his last retreat a Gardeners house; to the end he might dye the more poorely. His chastity though assaulted many times by the subtilty of the enemy of mankind, was alwayes victorious; and he preserved his innocency in such occasions, as that of others had assuredly suffered shipwrack.

His



His humility was so perfect ; that he thought himself happy to serve the meanest person. He took glory in instructing even a poore countrey man, and to confesse some good maid servant, and every where sought the lowest place. His innocency was so like that of a dove, that by his discourse it was easily judged what was in his heart. His mildnesse so extraordinary, that one look of his hath gained many souls to God. His prayer so fervent, that by his own relation, the upper part of his soul was onely active, and the lower part had no share in it. His recollection so intimate, that amongst his greatest employments he kept all the powers of his soul united to God. In fine his virtue and perfection so well known, that the Popes, Clement 8. Paul 5. and Gregory 15. have commended him ; the Kings of France and Spain honoured him, and all prelates endeavour to imitate him ; Heaven it self would acknowledge his merit, having given him the gift of miracles, and prophecy. By virtue of the first while he lived, he cured a young man of Tarentaise of an incurable palse ; and after his death he continued to do these miracles. By the gift of prophecy he knew that his death was near : for going unto Avignon upon the service of the Duke of Savoy ; he took his last leave of many of his friends : in con-

consequence whereof being arrived at Lyon, he fell sick, and having received Absolution, the blessed Sacrament of the Altar for his Viaticum, and Extream Unction for his last preparation, abundantly replenished with merits, he past out of this world to a better at eight of the clock at night the 28. of December, in the year 1622. a day dedicated to the memory of the holy Innocents; God having been pleased to choose this day to crown this holy man, after he had lived 56 years, and governed the Church of Geneva 22 years, in the state of a most innocent and exemplary life.

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THE  
AUTHOURS PREFACE.

*My dear Reader, I beseech thee to reade  
this Preface for thy satisfaction  
and mine.*

**T**He Nosegay-maker Glyceria, knew so well how to vary and mingle flowers, that of the same sorts she made a great variety of nose-gayes; insomuch that the painter Pausanias lost himself in vying with her this diversity of work; for he could not change his painting into so many fashions as she changed her nosegayes. So the holy Ghost disposes and orders with so much variety the instructions of devotion, which he gives by the tongues and pens of his servants, that the doctrine being alwayes the same, the discourses notwithstanding which are made thereof do very much differ, according to the divers methods in which they are composed. I neither can, will, nor ought to write in this Introduction, any thing but what hath been already published by our predecessours upon this subject; they are the same flowers which I present to thee dear Reader; but the nose-gay which I have made of them, shall be different from theirs, as being made in an other fashion,

2. Those

2. Those that have treated of devotion, have, almost all, regarded the instruction of persons altogether retired from worldly conversation; or at least have taught a kinde of devotion which leads to this absolute retreat. But my intention is to instruct such as live in towns, in families, in the Court, and by their condition are obliged to a publick life: who very often under colour of a pretended impossibility, will not so much as think upon undertaking a devout life; believing, that as no beast dare taste of the seed of the herb called *palma Christi*; so, no man ought to pretend to the palm of Christian piety, so long as he liveth in the throng of temporall affairs. And I make appear to them, that as the mother pearls do live in the sea, without receiving one drop of salt water; and as towards the Chelidonian Islands there are fountains of fresh water in the midst of the sea: and as the fire flies fly in the flames without burning their wings: so a vigorous and constant soul may live in the world, without participating of any worldly humour; may find out springs of sweet piety in the midst of the brackish waters of the world; and may fly amongst the flames of earthly concupiscences, without burning the wings of the sacred desires of a devout life. It is true, this is very difficult, and  
there-

therefore I desire that many would employ their cares herein with more zeal then hetherto they have done ; and I, weak as I am, shall endeavour by this work, to contribute some help to such , as with a generous heart will undertake this worthy enterprize.

3. Yet it was neither my desire nor inclination , that this Introduction should come to the publick view. A person full of true honour and virtue, having (some time ago) received the grace of God to aspire to a devout life, desired my particular assistance to that purpose : and I being many wayes obliged to that person, and having long before observed in him a great disposition to this design ; I was very carefull to instruct this person well : whom having conducted through all the exercises convenient to such a desire, and condition, I left many memorials in writing to make use of in time of need. This party afterwards communicated them with a great, learned, and devout Religious man, who believing that many might reap profit by them, earnestly advised me to publish them : and it was easie for him to perswade me to it ; because his friendship had great power upon my will, and his judgement a great authority over mine.

4. Now to the end that it might be  
more

more profitable and acceptable ; I have reviewed it, and put it into a kind of method, adding many advices and instructions proper to my intention : but all this I have done, having very little leasure. For which cause thou wilt find nothing exact, but onely a collection of plain advertisements, expressed in clear and intelligible words ; at least I desired to do so. As for elegancy of language, I would not so much as think of it, having other things enough to do.

5. I addresse my discourse to Philothea ; because desiring to reduce to the common advantage of souls, that which I had first writ for one onely, I call her by a name common to all such as desire to be devout ; for, Philothea signifies a soul loving, or in love with God. Representing then in this work a soul which by the desire of devotion aspires to the love of God ; I have divided this Introduction into five parts. In the first, I endeavour by certain perswasions and exercises to convert the simple desire of Philothea into an intire and firm resolution, which she makes at the end after her generall confession, by a solid protestation, followed by the most holy communion, in which giving her self to her Saviour, and receiving him, she enters happily into his holy love. That done, to lead her farther  
on ;

on ; I shew her two speciall means to unite her self more and more to his divine Majesty : the use of the Sacraments, by which this good God comes to us ; and holy prayer, whereby he draweth us to him : and in this I spend the second part. In the third, I shew her how she ought to exercise her self in many virtues most proper for her advancement : not stopping but at some particular advices, which she could hardly have had else where, or found out of her self. In the fourth part, I discover the stratagems of her enemies ; shewing her how she may escape them, and go forward. In the fifth and last part, I make her retire a little to refresh her self, recover breath, and repair her strength, that she may afterwards more courageously gain ground, and go forward in a devout life.

6. This is a fantastick age, and I foresee that many will say, it belongs onely to religious men, and persons of devotion to make such particular directions to piety ; that they require more leasure then a Bishop, charged with a Diocese so heave as mine, can spare ; that this distracts the understanding, which should be employed in affairs of greater importance. But I (my dear Reader) say to thee with great S. Denis, that it belongs principally to Bishops to guide souls to perfection ; since their  
Or-

Order is supreme among men, as is that of Seraphins among the Angels : so that their leasure cannot be better employed then in that. The ancient Bishops and Fathers of the Church, were at the least as carefull of their charge as we : yet refused they not for all that, to take care of the particular conduct of many souls, which had recourse to their assistance ; as it appeareth by their epistles : wherein they did imitate the Apostle, who in the midst of the generall harvest of the world, gathered notwithstanding certain ears, more remarkable, with a particular affection. Who knoweth not that Timotheus, Philemon, Onesimus, Thecla and Appia, were the dear children of great S. Paul ? as S. Mark and S. Petronilla of S. Peter ? S. Perronilla I say, who, (as Baronius and Galonius learnedly prove) was not the carnall, but onely the spirituall daughter of S. Peter. And Saint John, writes he not one of his canonicall epistles to the devout Lady Electa ?

7. It is a pain I confesse to guide souls in particular : but a comfortable pain, like that of the labourers in the harvest and vintage ; who are never better pleased, then when their labour is most hard, and their burden most heavy. It is a burden which recreates and revives the heart, by the pleasure it brings to those that bear it ; as the  
Cin-



Cinnamon comforts those that carry it through Arabia. They say the Tygre having found one of her whelps which the hunts-man leaves in the way to entertain her while he carries away the rest of the litter, she loads her self with it, be it never so great, and yet is not more heavy for that, but rather more light and apt to run the course she makes to save her self in her den; naturall love easing her with this burden. How much more willingly then will a fatherly heart take upon him the charge of a soul, which he finds in desire of holy perfection; carrying it in his bosome, as a mother doth her little child, without being sensible of the beloved burden! But this must be indeed a fatherly heart; and therefore the Apostles, and Apostolick men call their disciples, not onely their children, but more tenderly, their little children.

8. To conclude (my dear Reader) I confesse I have writ of a devout life, without being devout my self; yet not without a desire of being so. And it is this desire which hath given me courage to instruct thee. For as a great learned man said, to study is a good way to learn; to hear, is a better; but to teach is the best of all. It often happens (saith S. Augustine, writing to his devout Florintine) *that the office of distributing, gives us merit to receive : and the office*  
of

of teaching, serves us for a foundation of learning. Alexander caused the picture of his fair Compaspe, who was so dear to him, to be drawn by the hand of the onely famous Apelles; he being forced to contemplate Compaspe very seriously; as fast as he drew her features in his tablet, he imprinted the love of them in his heart, and became so passionate for her, that Alexander perceiving it, & taking pittie upon him, he gave her to him in marriage; depriving himself for his sake of the dearest friend he had in the world; wherein (saith Pliny) he shewed the greatnesse of his heart, as much, as he had ever done by his greatest victory.

9. Now, friendly Reader, I am of opinion, that it is the will of God, that I should paint upon the hearts of his people not onely common virtues, but also his most dear and welbelov'd Devotion. And I undertake the office willingly, as wel in obedience, & performance of my duty, as in hope that engraving this lovely virtue in the hearts of others, mine own may become enamoured with it. And if ever his divine Majesty shall find me passionately in love with her, he wil give her to me in an eternal marriage. The fair and chaste Rebecca watering Isaaks camels, was destined to be his wife, and received from him earrings and golden bracelets. So do I promise my self from  
the

the infinite goodnesse of God ; that guiding his dear flock to the wholesome waters of Devotion , he will make my soul his spouse ; putting in my ears the golden words of his holy love, and on my arms strength to practize them ; in which consisteth the essence of true devotion : which I humbly beseech his Majesty to grant me, and all the children of his holy Church. That Church to which I will for ever submit my writings, my actions, my words, my wills, and my thoughts.

*At Aneſſy, S. M. Magdalens  
day. 1608.*

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# THE PREFACE

*To the new Edition.*

IN affliction we commonly return to devotion; the former our friends in England have not wanted of late, and we hope they have had the latter, at least in their desires. This piece therefore will come very seasonably to them.

It has been formerly translated by a Reverend person of our Countrey: but he in his great humility, exposing it to the reviewing of others, it fell into the hands of some, who enlarging the authours stile by many unnecessary paraphrases, have in divers places confounded his sense; and made the book lesse portable.

In this edition we hope, we have remedied both these inconveniences. The first, by following the true sense of the Authour, and his own expressions, as near to the life, as the two languages will meet. The second, by printing it in somewhat a lesse character then formerly. So we are sure the volume will be much more portable: and we hope, the matter nothing the lesse intelligible.

What is most pretious to us we commonly carry about us: especially in a journey, where the wayes are dangerous: as  
well

well to secure it, as to take the pleasure in  
often viewing it. This is a precious jewell,  
and our friends travel now in none of the  
securest countreys : we shall therefore ad-  
vise them to wear it about them, and to  
view it frequently ; not doubting but by  
Gods grace the virtue of it will quickly  
passe through the eye to the heart : where  
if it work the effect we desire, which is to  
enflame them with the love of God ; we  
hope they will remember us in their devo-  
tions, who have remembred them in our  
labours, and shall never forget them at the  
holy Altar.

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THE FIRST PART  
OF THE INTRODUCTION  
CONTAINING ADVISES AND  
exercises requisite for the conduct of a  
soul from her first desire of a devout  
life, untill she be brought to a full reso-  
lution to embrace it.

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CHAP. I.

*A Description of true Devotion.*

1. **T**Hou aspirest to devotion ( my dear Philothea) because being a Christian, thou knowest that devotion is a virtue most acceptable to the Majesty of God. But since small faults committed in the beginning of any enterprise, in the progresse thereof grow infinitely greater, and in the end irreparable; it is necessary before all things that thou learn what the virtue of Devotion is; for since there is but one kind of true devotion, and many sorts of forged and false, if thou knowest not which is the true, thou mayest easily deceive, and amuse thy self in the pursuit of some impertinent and superstitious devotion.

2. Aurelius painted all the faces of his pictures to the air and resemblance of the women whom he loved; and every one painteth devotion according to his passi-

on and fancy. He that is given to fasting, thinks himself very devout, if he fast often, be his heart never so full of rancour: and not daring to moisten his tongue in wine or water, for sobrieties sake, yet makes no difficulty to drink deep of the bloud of his neighbour by slander and calumny. Another will account himself full of devotion, for hudling over a multitude of prayers every morning, though afterwards he give his tongue a liberty to utter offensive, arrogant, and reprochfull speeches amongst his neighbours and family. One willingly draws an alms out of his purse to give to the poor, but cannot draw clemency out of his heart to pardon his enemies. Another forgiveth his enemies, yet cares not to satisfie his creditours, but by constraint. All these people are devout in the vote of the vulgar, yet indeed they are not so at all.

3. The servants of King Saul sought David in his house, but Michol having layed a statue in his bed, covered it with Davids apparell, and made them believe it was David himself sick in bed: so, many persons cover themselves with certain externall actions belonging to devotion, and the world believes them truly devout & spirituall: whereas indeed they are but statues, and apparitions of devotion.

4. True

4. True and lively devotion (O Philothea) presupposeth the love of God: nay rather it is nothing else but a true love of God, yet not every sort of love: for, in as much as the love of God adorns our souls, it is called Grace, making us acceptable to his divine Majesty: in as much as it giveth us strength to do good works, it is called Charity: but when it is arrived at that degree of perfection, wherein it causeth us not onely to do well, but also to work diligently, frequently, and fervently, then it is called Devotion.

5. Ostriches flie never, hennes flie leisurely, low, and seldome, but Eagles, doves, and swallows flie high, often, and swiftly: so sinners flie not at all towards God, but make all their courses upon earth, and for earthly delights; good people, who are not yet arrived to the height of devotion, flie towards God by their good works, yet slowly, heavily, and seldome; but devout souls flie to God assiduously, chearfully, and vigorously. Briefly, Devotion is nothing else, but a spirituall swiftnesse and vigour, by means of which Charity worketh in us, or we by her, with diligence and affection: and as it is the office of Charity to make us put in practise the Commandments of God generally, and universally, so it is the part of Devotion to make



us observe them chearfully and diligently. Wherefore he who observeth not all the Commandments of God, can neither be esteemed good nor devout : since to be good, he must have charity ; and to be devout, besides charity he must have a great liveliness and chearfulness in charitable actions.

6. And for as much as devotion consisteth in a certain degree of transcendent charity, it makes us not onely vigorous, active, and diligent in the observation of Gods holy Commandments ; but it also provoketh us to perform with chearfulness and affection all manner of good works, although they be not at all commanded, but onely counselled, or inspired. For as a man newly recovered of some infirmity, walketh as much as is necessary for him, but yet leasurely and faintly : so a sinner lately reclaimed from his iniquity, walketh so far as God commandeth him, yet slowly, and faintly, untill such time as he attains to devotion : for then like a sound man, he not onely walketh, but even runnes, and springs forward in the way of Gods Commandments ; and besides, hastens on, and advances chearfully in the paths of heavenly counsels and inspirations.

7. To conclude, Charity and devotion differ no more one from the other, then fire from  
from

from flame : for charity is a spirituall fire, which, when it is well kindled is called Devotion : so that devotion addeth nothing to the fire of charity, but the flame, which renders charity chearfull, active, and diligent, not onely to the observance of Gods Commandments, but also to the practise of heavenly counsels, and inspirations.

## CHAP. II.

### *The properties and excellency of Devotion.*

**I.** They who discouraged the Israelites from going into the land of promise, told them it was a countrey that destroyed its inhabitants, having an air so contagious, that it was impossible to live long there; and further, that the natives thereof were such monsters, that they did eat up other men like locusts. So the world (my dear Psilothea) defames holy devotion, representing devout persons with an angry, sad, and grimme countenance, pretending that devotion engendreth melancholy, and insociable humours. But as Josue and Caleb protested not onely that the promised land was good and fair, but also that the acquisition, and possession thereof would be easie and pleasant : so, the holy Ghost by the mouths of all the Saints, and our Saviour by his own, assures us, that

a devout life is pleasant, happy, & amiable.

2. The world sees that devout people pray, fast, suffer injuries, serve the sick, give to the poor, watch, moderate their anger, restrain their passions, deprive themselves of sensuall pleasures, and do such other acts as are in themselves sharp and rigorous: but the world sees not the inward cordial devotion, which rendreth all their actions most pleasant, and easie. Consider the bees upon the Thyme; they find there very bitter juice, yet in sucking it they turn it into honey, because such is their property. O worldlings! It is true, devout souls find much bitterneffe in these exercises of mortification, but in performing them they are converted into sweeterneffe and delight. The fires, the flames, the racks, and swords, seemed flowers and perfumes to the Martyrs, because they were devout. If then Devotion bring delight to the most cruell torments, and even to death it self; what will it do to the actions of virtue? Sugar sweetens green fruits, and tempers the crudity and unwholesomnesse of the ripe: now Devotion is the true spirituall sugar, which taketh bitterneffe from mortification, and offensivenesse from consolation: it takes away discontent from the poor man, and solicitude from the rich: desolation from the oppressed, and insolence from the exalted:

exalted : sadnesse from the solitary, and dissolution from the merry companion: It serves for fire in the winter, and for dew in the summer : it knows how to abound, and how to suffer want : it renders equally profitable honour, and contempt : it entertains pleasure and pain, almost with the same chearfulnesse; and it replenisheth our souls with admirable sweetnesse.

3. Contemplate Jacobs ladder; ( for it is the true emblem of a devout life, the two sides between which we ascend, and to which the rounds are fastned, represent prayer, which obtains the love of God, and the Sacraments which conferre it: the rounds are nothing but divers degrees of charitie, by which we advance from virtue to virtue; either descending by action to the help and support of our neighbour, or ascending by contemplation to a blessed union with God. Now look ( I beseech you ) upon those which are on this ladder : they are either men, who have Angelicall hearts, or Angels who have humane bodies : they are not young, yet they seem so, because they are full of vigour, and spirituall activity : they have wings to flie and soar upward to God by holy prayer ; but they have feet also to walk with men by a holy and friendly con-

versation : their faces are fair, and pleasant, because they receive all things with sweetness and contentment ; their legges, their arms, and their heads are all uncovered, because their thoughts, affections, and actions have no other designe, nor motive, then to please God : the rest of their body is covered onely with a fair and light robe, to shew that they make use indeed of the world, and worldly things, yet in a most pure and sincere manner, not touching more of them then are necessary for their condition ; such are devout persons. Believe me ( dear Philothea ) devotion is the pleasure of pleasures, the Queen of Virtues, and the perfection of charity. If charity be milk, devotion is the cream : If charity be a plant, devotion is the flower : If charity be a precious stone, devotion is the lustre : If charity be a rich balm, devotion is the odour ; yea the odour of sweetness which comforts men, and rejoyces Angels.

#### CHAP. I. I.

*That devotion is futeable with all sorts of vocations, and professions.*

1. **I**N the creation God commanded the plants to bring forth their fruits, every one according to its kind ; even so com-

commandeth he all Christians who are living plants of his Church, to bring forth fruits of devotion, every one in his quality and vocation. Devotion ought to be differently exercised, by the Gentleman, the trades-man, the servant, the Prince, the widow, the maid, and the married person: and not onely so, but the practice also of devotion must be accommodated to the capacitie, the employments, and the obligations of each one in particular. For I pray thee (Philothea) were it proper that the Bishop should be solitary, like the Carthusian? or that the married persons should store up no more then the Capuchins? If the trades-man should be all day in the Church like the monk, and the Religious person alwayes exposed to all manner of encounters for the service of his neighbour as the Bishop, would not this devotion be ridiculous, preposterous, and insupportable? This fault neverthelesse happens very often, and the world which discerns not, or will not put a difference between the devotion, and indiscretion of those who pretend to be devout, blames and murmures at devotion.

2. No, Philothea, Devotion prejudiceth nothing, when it is true, but rather makes all things perfect: and when it is not sutable with the lawfull vocation of

any person, then without doubt it is false. The Bee (saith Aristotle) gains honey from the flowers without hurting them, leaving them entire and fresh, as she found them : but true devotion goes yet farther, for it not onely not prejudices any sort of vocation or employment, but on the contrary adorns and beautifies it.

3. All sorts of precious stones cast into honey become more glittering, each one according to its colour ; and all persons become more acceptable in their vocation, joyning it with devotion. The care of the family is thereby rendred lesse burthensome ; the love of the husband and wife more sincere ; the service of the Prince more faithfull ; and all sorts of businesse more easie and tolerable.

4. It is an error, or rather an heresie, to endeavour to banish a devout life from the company of soldiers, from the shops of trades-men, the Courts of Princes, or from the affaires of married people. It is true (Philothea) that devotion merely contemplative, monasticall, and religious cannot be exercised in those vocations : but besides these three sorts of devotion, there are divers others, proper to make perfect those who live in secular conditions. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, David, Job, Tobie, Sara, Rebecca, and Judith, beare witness

ness thereof in the old Testament; and in the new, S. Joseph, Lydia, and S. Crispin were perfectly devout in their shops; S. Anne, S. Martha, S. Monica, Aquila, Priscilla, in their families; Cornelius, S. Sebastian, S. Maurice, in the wars; Constantine, Helene, S. Lewis, S. Edward in their thrones. Nay it hath happened, that many have lost perfection in solitude, ( which notwithstanding is so much to be desired for perfection, ) and have preserved it in company, so little favourable to perfection. Lot (saith S. Gregory) who was so chaste in the city, defiled himself in solitude: wheresoever we are, we may, and ought to aspire to a perfect life.

#### CHAP. IV.

*Of the necessitie of a guide, to enter into, and proceed in devotion.*

1. **Y**ong Tobie being commanded to go to Rages, answered, I know no part of the way: go then, ( replied his father ) and seek some man to conduct thee. I say the same to thee Philothea, wouldst thou in good earnest walk towards devotion? seek some good man who may guide and conduct thee. This is the advice of advices. Although you search ( saith devout Avila ) you shall never find so safely the will of God, as by the way of this humble



ble obedience, so much recommended and practised by the ancient Saints. The blessed mother Tereſe, ſeeing the lady Catharine of Cordova perform ſo great penances, deſired much to imitate her, againſt the advice of her Confessor who had forbid her, and whom ſhe was much tempted to diſobey in that particular: but God ſaid to her, Daughter, thou art in a good and ſecure way; ſeeſt thou her penances? but I value more thy obedience: And hereupon ſhe eſteemed ſo highly this virtue, that beſides the obedience due to her ſuperiors, ſhe vowed a particular one to a man of excellent perfection; obliging her ſelf to follow his direction and conduct, where with ſhe was infinitely comforted, as well as many devout ſouls before and after her, who for the more entire reſignation of themſelves to God, have ſubmitted their wills to that of his ſervants, which S. Catharine of Siena highly applauded in her dialogues. The devout Princeſſe S. Elizabeth ſubmitted her ſelf with an exemplary obedience to Conradus. And behold here one of the adviſes w<sup>ch</sup> the great S. Lewys gave to his ſon before his death. Confess oft, chuſe an able & entire Confessor, who can inſtruct thee to do thoſe things which are neceſſary.

2. *A faithfull friend (ſaith the holy Scripture) is a ſtrong protection, he that hath*

*hath found him, hath found a treasure. A faithfull friend is a medicine of life, and immortalitie : those who fear God find him.*

These divine words point chiefly ( as you may see ) at immortalitie ; for which it is principally necessarie to have this faithfull friend, who by his directions, and counsels, may watch over our actions, and by this means secure us from the ambushes, and wiles of our ghostly enemy. He will be to us a treasure of wisdom in our afflictions, discontentments, and relapses : he will serve us as a cordiall, to refresh and comfort our hearts in spirituall diseases : he will preserve us from evill, and make what is good better : and when any infirmity shall befall us, he will hinder it from being mortal, for he will recover us.

3. But who shall find this friend ? the wise man answers, *they that fear God*, that is, the humble, who earnestly desire their spirituall advancement. Since then it imports thee so much, Philothea, to go with a good guide in this holy voyage of devotion, beseech God with great fervencie to grant thee such an one as may be according to his heart ; and doubt not, for he will rather send thee an Angel from heaven, as he did to young Tobie, then fail to give thee a good and faithfull one.

4. Now he ought alwaies to be an Angel

gel to thee : that is to say, when thou shalt have found him, consider him not as a man onely, neither confide in him, nor in his humane knowledge, but in God, who will favour thee by the means and mediation of this man ; putting in his heart, and in his mouth whatsoever shall be requisite for thy happinesse : so as thou oughtest to hear him as an Angel who descends from heaven to conduct thee thither. Treat with him with an open heart, in all sinceritie and fidelitie ; laying clearly open to him thy good, and thy ill, without feigning or dissimulation : and by this meanes thy good shall be tried and more assured, and thy ill shall be corrected, and amended : thou shalt be relieved and strengthened in thy afflictions, and moderated, and tempered in thy consolations. Place in him an entire confidence, mixed with a holy reverence, in such sort, as the reverence may not diminish the confidence, nor the confidence prejudice the reverence due unto him. Confide in him with the respect of a daughter towards her father ; respect him with the confidence of a Sonne towards his mother. Briefly, this friendship ought to be firm and sweet, all holy, all sanctified, all divine, and all spiritual.

5. To this end, choose one amongst a thousand, (saith Avila) and I say, amongst ten

ten thousand, for there are fewer then can be imagined, who are capable of this office. He must be full of charitie, knowledge, and prudence: if one of these three qualities be wanting in him, there is danger: and therefore I say again, ask him of God, and having obtained him, blesse his Divine Majestie, remain constant, and seek not others, but rather go on with him innocently, humbly, and with confidence, for so thou wilt make a most happy voyage.

#### CHAP. V.

*That we must begin with the cleansing of the soule.*

1. **F**LOWERS appear in our land, (saith the Spouse) *the time of cleansing and pruning is come.* What are the flowers of our hearts, Philothea, but good desires? now as soon as they appear, the hand must be put to the knife, to prune off from our consciences all dead and superfluous works. The alien maid who was to marrie with an Israelite, was to put off the robe of her captivitie, to pare her nails, and to shave her hair: and the soul that aspires to the honour to be Spouse to the Son of God, ought to put off the old man, and cloath her self with the new, casting off sin, and then to pare and shave away all manner of impediments, which may divert her from  
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the love of God. The beginning of our health is to be purged from offensive humours. S. Paul in a moment was cleansed with a perfect purgation, so was S. Katharine of Genua, S. M. Magdalene, S. Pelagia, and some others : but this sort of purgation is wholly miraculous and extraordinary in grace, as is the resurrection of the dead in nature ; and therefore we must not pretend to it. The ordinary purifying and healing (be it of the body, or mind) is not effected but by little and little, by going on from degree to degree with pain & leisure.

2. The Angels upon Jacobs ladder have wings, yet they fly not, but ascend, and descend in order from step to step. The soul which riseth from sin to devotion, is compared to the dawning of the morning, which in rising drives not away the darknesse in an instant, but by degrees. The cure (saith the Aphorisme) which is made by leisure, is ever the most assured. The diseases of the soul, as well as those of the body, come posting on horse-back, but depart leisurely on foot. Courage and patience then, O Philothea, are necessary in this enterprise. Alas ! how much are those souls to be pittied, who seeing themselves subject to many imperfections, having a little exercised themselves in devotion, begin to be troubled, disquieted, and dis-

discouraged, suffering their hearts almost to yield to the temptation of forsaking all, and returning back ! But on the other side, is it not exceeding dangerous for those soules, who by a contrary temptation make themselves believe that they are cleansed from their imperfections the first day of their purgation, and esteeming themselves perfect, being scarcely yet initiated, take upon them to flye without wings?

3. O Philothea, in what danger are they of relapsing, for being taken too soon out of the Physicians hands ? Ha ! *rise not before it be light*, (saith the Prophet) *rise after you have rested* ; and he himself practising this lesson, and having been already washed and purified, yet desires to be cleansed again.

4. The exercise of purging the soul cannot end, but with our life : let us not then afflict our selves with our imperfections, for our perfection consists in resisting them ; and we cannot resist them without seeing them, nor vanquish them without encountering them. Our victory lyes not in being not sensible of them, but in not consenting to them. But to be disturbed by them, is not to consent to them : nay it is necessary for the exercise of our humility, that we be sometimes wounded in this spiritual combat ; but we  
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are never to be accounted conquered, unless we either loose our life, or courage. Now imperfections, or venial sins, cannot deprive us of spiritual life; for that is not lost, but by mortal sin. It then onely remains, that they daunt not our courage: *Deliver me, O Lord,* said David, *from cowardise, and faint-heartednesse*: it is a happy condition for us in this warr, that we may be alwaies conquerours, if we will fight.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the first Purgation, which is that of mortal Sinne.*

I. **T**He first Purgation which ought to be made, is that of sin: the means to make it, is the Sacrament of Pennance: seek the most able Confessour thou canst; take in hand some one of the little books, which have been composed to help to confesse entirely and well; as Granada, Bruno, Arias, and Augerius; read them carefully, and observe from point to point, in what thou hast offended; beginning from the time thou hadst the use of reason, to that present hour. If thou dost distrust thy memory, write what thou hast observed; and having so prepared and gathered together the offensive humours of thy conscience, abhorre and reject them with the greatest grief

grief and contrition that thy heart can conceive; well pondering these four ensuing things. That by Sinne, thou hast lost the grace of God; Forsaken thy part in heaven; Accepted of the perpetual pains of hell; And renounced the eternal love of God.

2. Thou seest, Philothea, that I speak of a general Confession of the whole life; which though I hold not alwayes absolutely necessary, yet I consider withal, that it will be exceeding profitable to thee in this beginning; and therefore I earnestly advise it. It happens often that the ordinary confessions of those that live a common and vulgar life, are full of great defects; for many times they prepare not themselves at all, or very little, neither have they sufficient contrition: nay it often happeneth, that they confesse with a tacite will of returning to sin, because they are not willing to avoid the occasions thereof, nor make use of the meanes necessary to amendment of life: and in all these cases, a general Confession is requisite to secure the soul. But besides, a general Confession recalls us to the knowledge of our selves; it stirres us up to a wholesome shame and confusion for our life past; causes us to admire the mercy of God, who hath so long, and so patiently expected



expected us: It quiets our hearts, refreshes our spirits, excites in us good resolutions, gives occasion to our ghottly father to prescribe us advises more suitable with our condition, and opens our hearts, that we may with more confidence expresse our selves in our ensuing confessions. Speaking then of a general renewing of our hearts, and of an intire conversion of our soules to God, by means of a devout life, it seems reasonable to me, Philothea: that I advise thee to this general Confession.

#### CHAP. VII.

*Of the second purgation, which is, that of the affection to sinne.*

I. **A**Ll the Israelites departed in effect out of the land of Egypt, but not in affection: wherefore in the wildernesse many of them repined that they had not the onions and fleshpots of Egypt. So there are Penitents, who in effect forsake sin, but not in affection; that is, they purpose to sin no more, but it is with a certain reluctance of heart, to abstain from those mischievous delights of sin. Their hearts renounces sin, and avoids it, but it ceases not to look often back that way, as Lots wife did towards Sodom. They abstain from sin, as the sick from melons, which they

they forbear because the Physician threatens them with death if they eat them; but they are troubled to refrain: they talk of them, and are unwilling to believe them hurtful: they would at least smell to them, and account those happy who may eat them: So the weak, and faint-hearted penitents abstain from sin for a time, but to their grief: they would willingly sin, and not be damned: they speak of sin with a great contentment, and think those most happy who sin.

2. A man resolved to revenge himself, will change his mind in confession; but soon after, he will be found amongst his friends taking pleasure to speak of his quarrel, and saying, *Had it not been for the fear of God, he would have done this, or that: O how hard is Gods Law in this point of forgiving! I would to God revenge had been permitted.* Ah! who sees not that although this poor man be without sin, he retains notwithstanding the affection to sin; and being out of Egypt in effect, he is there yet in desire, longing after the garlick and onions he was wont to eat: as doth the woman, who having abandoned her wanton loves, is pleased nevertheless to be courted and frequented? Alas! in what danger are such people?

3. O Philothea, since thou art willing

to undertake a devout life, thou must not onely forsake sin it self, but also cleanse thy heart from all affections to sin. For besides the danger of relapsing, these wretched affections will perpetually waste, and deject thy spirit; so that thou wilt not be able to do good works chearfully, diligently, and frequently; wherein consists the very essence of devotion. Those soules who are gone out of the state of sin, but still retain their affections to sin, may (in my opinion) be likened to maids who have the green sicknesse; they are not sick, yet are all their actions distempered: they eat without relish, sleep without rest, laugh without delight, and rather dragg themselves along, then walk. Just so these soules do good; but with so great a spiritual wearinesse, that it takes away all the grace from their good works, which are few in number, and small in effect.

### CHAP. VIII.

*Of the meanes to make this second Purgation.*

I. **N**OW the first means and foundation of this second Purgation, is a lively and strong apprehension of the great prejudice sin brings us, which causeth us to enter into a deep and vehement contrition. For as contrition, (so it be true) be it never so little,

little, especially being joyned with the virtue of the Sacraments, cleanses us sufficiently from sin: so when it is great and fervent, it cleanseth us from all affections which depend upon sin. A weak hatred makes us loath, and avoid the company of him that we hate: but if it be a mortal and violent hatred, we not only flye and abhorre him, but we detest the conversation even of his friends and kindred; yea we hate his very picture, and whatsoever belongs to him. So when the penitent hates his sin, onely with a light, though a true contrition, he resolves indeed to sin no more; but when he abhors it with a powerful, and vigorous contrition, he then not onely detests the sin, but all the affections, dependences, and occasions of sin.

2. We must then, Philothea, enlarge our contrition and repentance, as much as is possible, to the end, it may extend to the least, and meanest consequence of sin. S. Mary Magdalene in her conversion, so utterly lost the contentment and pleasure she had taken in sin, that she never more thought of it. And David protested not onely to abhorre sin, but also all the waies and paths of it. In this point consists the renewing of the Soul; which the same Prophet compares to the growing young of an Eagle.

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3. Now to gain this apprehension and contrition, thou must diligently employ thy self in these following meditations: which being well practised, will (by the help of Gods grace) root out of thy heart all sin, with its principal affections: and indeed, to this end it is that I have framed them. Thou shalt use them in order, as I have placed them, taking but one for each day, and that, if it may be, in the morning, (which is the most proper time for all spiritual exercises) to the end that thou mayest ruminate, and meditate upon them the rest of the day. But if thou art not yet accustomed to meditation, observe that which shall be said in the second part.

### CHAP. IX.

#### *The first Meditation, of our Creation.*

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee.

#### *Considerations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER that so many years past thou wert not yet in the world, and that thy being was a meer nothing. Where wert thou (O my soul) at that time? the world had then lasted so many ages, and yet there was no newes of thee.

2. God hath framed thee out of this nothing,

nothing, to render thee what thou art, merely of his own goodnesse, having no need at all of thee.

3. Consider the being that God hath given thee; for it is the highest in this visible world, capable of eternall life, and perfect unity with the Majesty of God himself.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Humble thy self profoundly in the presence of God; saying in thy heart with the Psalmist, O Lord, I am in thy sight as a meer nothing, and how hadst thou remembrance of me to create me? Alas my soul, thou wert ingulfed in that ancient nothing, and hadst yet been there if God had not drawn thee thence: and what couldest thou have done remaining there?*

2. *Give thanks to God. O my great and good Creatour, how am I obliged to thee, since thou hast vouchsafed to take me out of this nothing and by thy great mercy to make me what I am! what can I do to blesse thy holy name as I ought, and to render due thanks to thy inestimable goodnesse?*

3. *Confound thy self.* But alas my Creatour, instead of uniting my self to thee by love and service, I am become rebellious by my inordinate affections, wandering and straying from thee, to unite my self to sin;

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valuing thy goodnesse no more, then if thou hadst not been my Creatour.

4. *Prostrate thy self before God.* O my soul, know that our Lord is thy God; it is he that hath made thee, and not thou thy self. O God I am the work of thy hands.

5. I will then no more henceforth take pleasure in my self, since of my self I am nothing. Why doest thou magnifie thy self O dust and ashes? yea rather, O very nothing, why doest thou exalt thy self? To humble therefore my self, I resolve to do such and such things, to suffer such and such disgraces: I will change my life, and hereafter follow my Creatour, and esteem my self honoured with that condition, and being which he hath given me, employing it entirely in obedience to his will, by such means as shall be taught me, and whereof I will inform my self by my Ghostly father.

*Conclusion.*

1. *Give thanks to God.* Blessie thy God O my soul, and let all my bowells praise his holy name, for his goodnesse hath drawn me, and his mercy hath created me out of nothing.

2. *Offer.* O my God, I offer to thee the being which thou hast given me; from my heart I dedicate and consecrate it to thee.

3. *Pray.* O God strengthen me in these affections, and resolutions: O holy Virgin  
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recommend them to the mercy of thy Son,  
with all for whom I ought to pray, &c.  
*Pater. Ave. Credo.*

4. After thy prayer, walk a while; and  
out of these considerations which thou hast  
made, collect a little nosegay of devotion,  
to smell to all the rest of the day.

### CHAP. X.

2. *Meditation. Of the end for which we  
were created.*

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence  
of God, 2. Beseech him to inspire thee.

*Considerations.*

1. **G**OD hath not placed thee in this  
world for any need he had of thee, who art  
altogether unprofitable to him, but onely  
to exercise his goodnesse in thee, giving  
thee his grace and glory. And to that end  
he hath enriched thee with an understand-  
ing to know him; with a memory to be  
mindfull of him; a will to love him; an  
imagination to represent to thy self his be-  
nefits; eyes to behold his wondrous works;  
a tongue to praise him; and so of other fa-  
culties.

2. Being created, and put into the world  
for this intention, all actions contrary to  
it are to be avoided and rejected; and those  
which conduce not to this end, ought to be  
contemned as vain, and superfluous.

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3. Consider the wretchednesse of worldlings, who never think of this, but live as though they did believe themselves created to no other end then to build houses, plant trees, heap up riches, and such like fooleries.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Confound thy self, and reproch to thy soul her misery, which hath been heretofore so great as that she hath seildome or never considered this.* Alas! (shalt thou say) how did I employ my thoughts, O God, when I placed them not upon thee? what did I remember, when I forgot thee? what did I love, when I loved not thee? Alas! I ought to have fed upon truth, and I have glutted my self with vanity; I have served the world, which was created but to serve me.

2. *Detest thy life past.* I renounce you O vain thoughts, and unprofitable fancies: I abjure you O frivolous, and hatefull remembrances: O unfaithfull and disloyall friendships, lewd and wretched slaveries, ungratefull contentments, and irksome pleasures, I abhorre you.

3. *Return to God.* And thou O my God, my Saviour, thou shalt be from hence forth the sole object of my thoughts; no, I will no more apply my mind to cogitations which may be displeasing to thee. My memory shall entertain it self all the dayes of  
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my life with the greatnesse of thy clemency so mercifully shewed towards me: thou shalt be the delight of my heart, and the sweetnesse of my affections.

4. Ha! such and such trash, and trifles to which I applied my self, such and such unprofitable employments wherein I fondly squandred away my dayes, such and such affections which captivated my heart, shall henceforth be a horroure to my thoughts; and to this end I will use such and such good remedies.

*Conclusion.*

1. *Thank God who made thee for so excellent an end.* Thou hast created me O Lord for thy self, and to enjoy eternally the immensitie of thy glory: O when shall I be worthy of it? when shall I blesse thee according to my duty?

2. *Offer.* I offer to thee (O my dear Creatour) all these affections, and resolutions with all my heart and soul.

3. *Pray.* I beseech thee O God, to accept these my desires and vows, and to give thy holy benediction to my soul, to the end that it may accomplish them, through the merits of the bloud of thy blessed Sonne shed upon the Crosse, &c.  
*Pater. Ave. Credo. Make thy little nosegay of devotion, as aforesaid.*

## CHAP. XI.

3. *Meditation. Of the benefits of God.*  
*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence  
 of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee.  
*Considerations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER corporall graces which God hath given thee; what a body, what commodities to maintain it, what health and lawfull recreations to entertain it, what friends, and assistances. But consider all this with respect to many other persons much more worthy then thy self, who are destitute of all these blessings; some spoiled in their bodies, health, and members, others abandoned to the mercy of reproaches, contempts, and dishonours, others oppressed with poverty; and God hath not suffered thee to become so miserable.

2. Consider the gifts of mind; how many are there in the world stupified, frantick, and mad, and why art not thou of this number? God hath favoured thee: How many are there who have been brought up rudely, and in profound ignorance? and by Gods providence thou hast been educated civilly, and honourably.

3. Consider spirituall graces. O Philothea, thou art a child of the Catholick Church, God hath taught thee to know him even from thy youth. How often hath he  
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given thee his Sacraments? how many inspirations, internall illuminations, and reprehensions for thy amendment? how frequently hath he pardoned thee thy faults? how often hath he delivered thee from occasions of casting thy self away to which thou wert exposed? and these years past, were they not given thee as a leisure, and opportunity to advance the good of thy soul? Consider in particular, how sweet and gracious God hath been to thee.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Admire the goodnesse of God.* O how good is my God towards me! O how gracious he is! how rich is thy heart O Lord in mercy, and liberall in clemency! O my soul, let us recount for ever how many favours he hath done to us.

2. *Be astonished at thy ingratitude.* But what am I (O Lord) that thou art so mindfull of me! Ah, how great is my unworthinesse! Alas, I have even troden thy blessings underfoot. I have dishonoured thy graces, converting them into abuse and contempt of thy soveraigne goodnesse. I have opposed the depth of my ingratitude to that of thy grace, and favour.

3. *Stirre thy self up to acknowledgement.* Well then my heart, be now no more unfaithfull, ungratefull, and disloyall to this great benefactor. And how,

shall not my soul henceforth be wholly subject unto God, who hath wrought so many wonders and favours in me, and for me?

4. Ha! withdraw then thy body, Philothea, from such and such sensualities, and consecrate it to the service of God, who hath done so much for it. Apply thy soul to know, and to acknowledge him, by such exercises as shall be requisite for that purpose. Employ diligently the means which are in the Church to save thy self, and to love Almighty God. Yes (O my God) I will frequent prayer, I will hear thy holy word, and put in practise thy inspirations and counsells.

*Conclusion.*

1. Thank God for the knowledge he hath now given thee of thy duty, and for the benefits received heretofore.

2. Offer him thy heart with all thy resolutions.

3. Pray him that he will strengthen thee to practise them faithfully, through the merits of the death of his sonne: implore the intercession of the blessed Virgin, and of the Saints. *Pater noster. Ave Maria.*

*Make thy little spirituall nosegay as before.*

## CHAP. XII.

## 4. Meditation. Of Sinne.

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee.

*Considerations.*

1. **C** All to mind how long it is since thou beganst to sin, and examine how much since that beginning sins have been multiplied in thy heart. How every day thou hast encreased them against God, against thy self, and against thy neighbour, by work, by word, or by desire.

2. Consider thy evil inclinations, and how far thou hast followed them. And by these two points thou shalt find that thy sins are greater in number then the hairs of thy head, yea then the sands of the sea.

3. Consider in particular the sin of ingratitude against God, which is a general sin, and extendeth it self over all the rest, and maketh them infinitely more enormous. Consider then how many benefits God hath bestowed upon thee, and how thou hast abused them all in prejudice of the giver. And in particular, how many inspirations hast thou despised? how many good motions hast thou made unprofitable? but above all, how many times hast thou received the Sacraments, and

where are the fruits thereof? what are become of all those precious jewels wherewith thy dear Spouse adorned thee? all these have been buried under thy iniquities. With what preparation hast thou received them? Think upon this ingratitude; that God having run so far after thee, thou hast run from him to loose thy self.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Be confounded in thy misery.* O my God, how dare I appear before thine eyes? Alas, I am but the corruption of the world, and a very sink of sin and ingratitude. Is it possible that I have been so disloyall, that I have not left any one of my senses, nor any one of the powers of my soul which I have not corrupted, violated, and defiled? and that not so much as one day of my life hath passed, in which I have not brought forth such wicked effects? is it thus that I ought to recompence the benefits of my Creatour, and the pretious blood of my Redeemer?

2. *Crave pardon; and cast thy self at the feet of thy Lord like a prodigall child, as a Magdalene, or like a woman that hath defiled her marriage-bed with all kind of Adulterie.* Mercy, O Lord, upon this poore sinner. Alas, O living fountain of compassion, have pity upon this wretch.

3. *Resolve*

3. *Resolve to live better.* No, O Lord, never more with the help of thy grace; never more will I abandon my self to sinne. Alas, I have loved it too much; now I detest it, and imbrace thee; O Father of mercy, I will live, and die in thee.

4. To expiate my sins past, I will accuse my self of them couragiously, and will not leave one unbanished from my heart.

5. I will do all possible endeavour to extirpate all roots of sin from my heart: and in particular, such and such vices which do most annoy me.

6. To accomplish this, I will constantly embrace the means which shall be advised me, and think never to have done enough to repair so grievous offences.

*Conclusion.*

1. Give God thanks, for expecting thy amendment untill this houre, and blesse him that he hath given thee these affections.

2. Offer him up thy heart, that thou maist put them in execution.

3. Desire him to strengthen thee, &c.  
*Pater. Ave. Credo.*

*Make thy little nosegay of devotion as aforesaid.*



## CHAP. XIII.

## 5. Meditation. Of Death.

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee with his grace. 3. Imagine thy self to be extreemly sick, and without hope of recovery.

*Considerations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the uncertainty of the day of thy death. O my soul, thou must out of this body one day: but when shall that day be? shall it be in winter, or in summer? in Citie, or in Countrie? by day, or by night? shall it be suddenly, or upon notice given thee? by sicknesse, or by accident? shalt thou have leisure to confesse thee? shalt thou have the assistance of thy Ghostly Father? Alas! of all this we know nothing at all: onely certain it is that we shall die, and that alwayes sooner then we imagine.

2. Consider that then the world shall end in regard of thee; for it will last no longer to thee, it will turn upside down before thine eyes: for then the pleasures, the vanities, the worldly joyes, and fond affections of our life will seem to us shadows, and airy clouds. Ah wretch! for what toyes and trifles have I offended God? Thou shalt then see, that for a nothing we have forsaken him. On the contrar.

trary, devotion and good works will then seem sweet to thee, and delightfull. O wherefore did I not follow this fair and pleasant path? Then sins which seemed very little, will appear as big as mountains, and thy devotion very small.

3. Consider the long and languishing fare-wells which thy soul will then give to this world: she will then take her leave of riches, vanities, and all idle companie; of pleasures, pastimes, friends, and neighbours; of kindred, children, husband and wife; briefly of every creature; and finally of her own body, which she shall leave pale, hideous, and loathsome.

4. Consider with what hurrying they will carry away this body to cover it under the earth: which done, the world will no more think of thee, then thou hast thought upon others; Gods peace be with him, (will they say) and that is all. O death how void art thou of regard or pittie?

5. Consider how the soul being departed from the body, she takes her way to the right and to the left. Alas! whither shall thine goe? what way shall it take? no other then that which it begun here in this world.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. Pray to God, and cast thy self into his armes. Alas, O my Lord, receive me into thy

thy protection at that dreadfull day: make that houre happy and favourable unto me; and rather let all other dayes of my life be sad and sorrowfull.

2. *Despise the world.* Seeing I know not the hour wherein I must leave thee, O wretched world, I will no more fix my love upon thee. O my dear friends, and allies, pardon me if I love you no more, but with a holy friendship which may last eternally: for why should I unite my self to you so, as to be forced to break and dissolve that knot.

3. I will then prepare my self against that houre, and take all requisite care to end this journey happily: I will secure the estate of my conscience to the uttermost of my abilitie, and take present order for reparation of such and such defects.

*Conclusion.*

4. Give thanks to God for these resolutions which he hath given thee: offer them to his Divine Majestie. Be instant with him to give thee a happie death, by the merits of that death of his dearly beloved Son. Implore the assistance of the blessed Virgin, and holy Saints. *Pater. Ave. Credo. Make a posie of myrrhe.*

## CHAP. XIV.

## 6. Meditation. Of Judgement.

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee with his grace.

*Considerations.*

1. **A**fter the time that God hath prescribed for the continuance of the world, and after many signes, and horrible presages which will cause men to wither away for fear and anguish, a fire raging like a torrent shall burn and reduce to ashes every thing that is upon the face of the earth, nothing which we see upon it shall be spared.

2. After these flames and thunderbolts, all men shall rise from their graves, (excepting such as are already risen) and at the voyce of the Angel they shall all appear in the valley of Josaphat. But alas, with what difference? for the one sort shall rise in glorified, and resplendent bodies, the other in bodies most hideous and horrid.

3. Consider the Majestie wherewith the sovereign Judge will appear, environed with all his Angels and Saints: Before him shall be born his Crosse, shining much brighter then the sun; an ensign of mercy to the good, and of justice to the wicked.

4. This

4. This soveraign Judge, by his dreadfull command which shall be suddainly obeyed, will separate the good from the bad, placing the one at his right hand, and the other at his left, (O everlasting separation !) after the which these two bands shall never meet.

5. This separation being made, and the books of conscience opened, all men shall see clearly the malice of the wicked, and their contempt against God ; and on the other side, the penance of the good, and the effects of the grace of God which they have received ; and nothing shall lie hidden. O God, what a confusion wil this be for the one, and what a consolation for the other !

6. Consider the last sentence pronounced against the wicked : *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Pöder wel these weighty words. Go, saith he ; a word of eternal banishment against those unfortunate wretches, excluding them eternally from his glorious presence. He calls them *cursed* : O my soul, how dreadful a curse : a general curse including all manner of woes : an irrevocable curse comprehending all times, and eternity. He addeth, *into everlasting fire* : Behold, O my heart, this vast eternity : O eternal eternity of pains, how dreadfull art thou ?

7. Con-

7. Consider the contrary sentence of the good. *Come*, saith the Judge: O sweet word of salvation, by which God draweth us unto himself, and receiveth us into the bosome of his goodnesse! *Blessed of my father*: O dear blessing, which comprehends all happiness! *Possesse the Kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world*: O good God, what excessive of bounty! for this Kingdome shall never have an end.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. Tremble, O my soul, at the remembrance hereof. O my God, who can secure me in that day, in which the pillars of heaven shall tremble for fear?

2. Detest thy sinnes, which onely can condemn thee in that dreadful day.

3. *Ab! wretched heart of mine, resolve to amend*. O Lord, I will judge my self now, that I may not be judged then. I will examine my conscience, and condemn my self. I will accuse, and chastise my self, that the eternal Judge condemn me not in that dreadful day. I will therefore confesse, and accept of all necessary advices, &c.

*Conclusion.*

1. Thank God who hath given thee means to provide for that day, and time to do penance.

2. Offer him thy heart to perform it.

3. Pray

3. Pray him to give thee grace duly to accomplish it. *Pater. Ave. Credo. &c.*  
*Make thy spiritual posie for all the day.*

## CHAP. XV.

### 7. Meditation. Of Hell.

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Humble thy self, and implore his assistance. 3. Represent to thy self a dark city all burning, and stinking with pitch and brimstone, and full of inhabitants who cannot get out.

### *Considerations.*

1. **T**He damned are in the depth of Hell, as within this woful city; where they suffer unspeakable torments in all their senses, and members; because, as they have employed all their senses and members in sinning, so shall they suffer in them all the pains which are due to sin. The eyes, for lascivious looks, shall be afflicted with the horrid vision of Hell, and Divels. The eares, for delighting in vicious discourses, shall hear nothing but wailings, lamentations, desperate howlings: and so of the rest.

2. Besides all these torments there is yet another greater, which is the losse and privation of the glory of God, from the sight of which they are excluded for ever. Now if Absalom found it more grievous

to him to be deprived of the amiable face of his father David, then to be banished; O God, what a grief will it be to be for ever excluded from beholding thy most sweet, and gracious countenance !

3. Consider above all the eternity of these pains, which onely thing maketh Hell intolerable. Alas ! if a flea in our eare, or if the heat of a little feaver make one short night so long and tedious ; how terrible will the night of Eternity be, accompanied with so many torments ? from this Eternity proceedeth eternal desperation, infinite rage, and blasphemy, &c.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Terrifie thy soul with the words of holy Job.* O my soul, art thou able to live for ever in everlasting flames, and amidst this devouring fire ? wilt thou forsake the sight of thy God for ever ?

2. *Confesse that thou hast deserved it, yea oftentimes.* From henceforth I will take a new course ; for why should I descend into this bottomlesse pit ? I will therefore do this or that endeavour to avoid sin, which onely can bring me to this eternal death.

*Give thanks, offer, pray. Pater. Ave. Credo.*



## CHAP. XVI.

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Beseech him to inspire thee with his grace.

*Considerations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER a fair and clear night, and think how pleasant it is to behold the skie all spangled with that multitude, and variety of starres, to joyn this now with the beauty of as clear a day, so as the brightnesse of the sun may no wayes hinder the lustre of the starres nor moon; and then say boldly, that all this put together is nothing in regard of the excellent beauty of that great Paradise. O how this lovely place is to be desired! O how precious is this City!

2. Consider the glory, beauty, and multitude of the Inhabitants in this blessed countrey; those millions of millions of Angels, Cherubins, and Seraphims; those troupes of Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and holy Matrons: The number is innumerable. O blessed is this company! the meanest of them is more beautiful to behold then all the world: what a sight then will it be to see them all? But O my God, how happy are they? they sing continually harmonious songs of eternal love, they alwaies  
enjoy

enjoy a constant mirth, they interchange one with another unspeakable contentments, and live in the comfort of a happy, and indissoluble society.

3. In fine, consider how blessed they are to enjoy God, who rewardeth them for ever with his lovely aspect, and by the same infuseth into their hearts a treasure of delights: how great a happinesse it is to be united everlastingly unto their maker. They are there, like happy birds, flying, and singing perpetually in the ayre of his Divinity, which encompasseth them on all sides with incredible pleasure. There every one doth his best, and without envy sings the Creatours praise. Blessed be thou for ever, O sweet and sovereign Creatour and Redeemer, who art so bountiful to us, and doest communicate to us so liberally the everlasting treasures of thy glory. Blessed be you for ever, saith he, my beloved creatures, who have so faithfully served me, and who now shall praise me everlastingly with so great love and courage.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

1. *Admire and praise this heavenly countrey.* O how beautiful art thou my dear Hierusalem! and how happy are thy Inhabitants!

2. *Reproach to thy heart the little courage*

rage which it hath had to this present, in wandring so far from the way of this glorious habitation. O why have I so far strayed from my sovereign good? Ah, wretch that I am, for these foolish and trivial pleasures have I a thousand thousand times forsaken eternal and infinite delights: was I mad to despise such precious blessings, for so vain and contemptible affections?

3. *Aspire notwithstanding with fervour to this delicious habitation.* O my gracious God, since it hath pleased thee at length to direct my wandering steps into the right way, never hereafter will I turn back. Let us go my dear soul, let us go to this eternal repose; let us walk towards this blessed land which is promised us: what make we in this Egypt? I will therefore disburthen my self of all such things as may divert, or retard me in so happy a journey. I will perform such and such things as may conduct me to it. Give thanks, offer pray. *Pater. Ave. Credo.*

## CHAP. XVII.

9. *Meditation. By way of election, and choise of Paradise.*

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Humble thy self before his Majestie, beseech him to inspire thee

thee with his grace. 3. Imagine thy self to be in a plain field, all alone, with thy good Angel, as young Toby going to Rages, and that he sheweth thee Paradise open, with all the pleasures represented in the former meditation of Paradise; then beneath that he sheweth thee Hell wide open, with all the torments described in the meditation of Hell: thou being thus placed in thy imagination, and kneeling before thy good Angel,

*Considerations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that it is most true thou art between Heaven and Hell; and that the one and the other is open to receive thee, according to the choice which thou shalt make.

2. Consider, that the choise which one makes in this world shall last for all eternity in the other.

3. And though both the one and the other be open to receive thee, according to thy choise, yet God, who is ready to give thee either the one by his justice, or the other by his mercy, desireth notwithstanding with an incomparable desire that thou wouldest make choice of heaven, and thy good Angel also importuneth thee with all his power, offering thee on Gods behalf a thousand assistances, and  
a thou-

a thousand graces to help thee thither.

4. Consider that Jesus Christ beholdeth thee from above in his clemency, and graciously inviteth thee, saying; come my dear soul to everlasting rest within the armes of my goodnesse, where I have prepared immortal delights for thee in the abundance of my love. Behold likewise with thy inward eyes the holy Virgin, who with a motherly love exhorteth thee, saying; courage, my child, despise not the desires of my sonne, nor so many sighs which I have cast forth for thee, thirsting with him after thy eternal salvation. Behold the Saints also which exhort thee, and millions of blessed soules sweetly inviting thee, and wishing nothing more then to see thy heart united with theirs to praise God for ever, assuring thee that the way to Heaven is not so hard as the world makes it. Courage dear friend (say they;) He that shall diligently consider the way of devotion by which we ascended hither, shall see that we came to these delights by pleasures incomparably more sweet then those of the world.

*Election.*

1. O Hell, I detest thee now and for evermore: I detest thy torments and pains; I detest thy miserable and accursed eternitie; and above all, I detest those  
eternal

eternall blasphemies & maledictions which thou vomitest out eternally against thy God. And turning my heart and soul to thee, O beautifull Paradise, everlasting glorie, and endlesse felicitie, I choose my habitation for ever and irrevocably within thy fair & sacred mansions, within thy holy & most lovely tabernacles. I blesse thy mercie, O my God, and accept the offer thereof which it pleaseth thee to make me. O my Saviour Jesus, I accept thy everlasting love, and advow the purchase which thou hast made for me of a place in this blessed Jerusalem, not so much for any other thing as to love and blesse thee for ever and ever.

2. Accept the favours which the blessed Virgin and the Saints present to thee. Promise them to advance towards them, and give thy hand to thy good Angel that he guide thee thither: encourage thy soul to make this choise. *Pater. Ave. Credo.*

### CHAP. XVIII.

10. *Meditation. By way of election, and choise which the soul maketh of a devout life.*

*Preparation.* 1. Place thy self in the presence of God. 2. Prostrate thy self before him, and implore the assistance of his grace.

#### *Considerations.*

1. I Magine thy self again to be in a plain field, all alone with thy good Angell;  
D and

and that thou seest on thy left hand the Devil seated upon a great high throne, with many infernall spirits about him, and invironed with a great troupe of worldlings, which all bare-headed acknowledge him for their Lord, and do him homage, some by one sin, and some by another. Observe the countenance of al these woful courtiers, of this abominable King. Behold some of them transported with hatred, envie, and choler; others killing one another; others waited, pensive, and carking to heap up riches; others attentive to vanity, without any manner of pleasure, which is not unprofitable and vain; others wallowing, buried, and putrified in their brutish affections. Behold how they are all without rest, order, and decency: behold how they despise one another, and love but in shew. In a word, thou shalt see a pittifull Commonwealth miserably tyrannized by this cursed King, which will move thee to compassion.

2. On the other side behold Jesus Christ crucified, who with a cordiall love prayeth for these poor enthralled people, that they may be freed from this tyrannie, and calls them to himself: Behold round about him a troupe of devout persons with their Angels. Contemplate the beautie of this Kingdom of devotion. O what a sight it is to see this troupe of Virgins, men and women, whiter

whiter then the lillies, that assemblie of widows, full of holy mortification and humilitie: See the ranks of divers married people, living peaceably together with mutuall respect, which cannot be without great charitie. Consider how these devout souls joyn the exteriour care of their house with the care of the interiour, the love of the husband with that of the celestiall bridegroom. Consider them all universally, and thou shalt see them in a sweet, holy, and lovely methode observing our Saviour, whom every one would willingly plant in the midst of his heart. They are full of joy, but their joy is comely, charitable, and well ordered; they love one another, but their love is most pure and sacred. Such as suffer afflictions amongst this devout company torment not themselves much, nor loose courage. Lastly, behold those eyes of our Saviour, who comforteth them, and how they all together aspire unto him.

3. Thou hast already shaken of Sathan, with all his cursed and execrable troupe, by the good affections thou hast conceived; but thou art not yet arrived at Jesus, nor united with this blessed and holy companie of devout people, but hast hitherto kept thy self between one and the other.

4. The blessed Virgin, with S. Joseph, S. Lewis, S. Monica, and a hundred thou-



and others who are in the Squadron of those that lived in the world do invite and encourage thee.

5. The crucified King calleth thee by thine own name : come my well beloved, come that I may crown thee.

*Election.*

1. O world ! O abominable troupe ! no, never shall you see me under your banner. I have for ever left of your fooleries and vanities. O King of pride ! O cursed King, infernall spirit ! I renounce thee with all vain pomps, I detest thee with all thy works.

2. And turning my self to thee, my dear Jesus, King of felicitie, and immortall glorie, I embrace thee with all the powers of my soul, I adore thee with all my heart, I choose thee now and ever for my King, and by my inviolable fidelitie I pay thee irrevocable homage, and submit my self to the obedience of thy holy laws and ordinances.

3. O Sacred Virgin, my dear Lady, I choose thee for my guide, I put my self under thy colours, I offer to thee a particular respect and speciall reverence.

4. O my good Angell, present me to this sacred assembly, and forsake me not untill I arrive at this blessed companie, with whom I say and will say for ever, in testi-

monie

monie of my choise, Live Jesus, Live Jesus. *Pater. Ave. Credo.*

# CHAP. XIX.

*How to make a generall confession.*

I. **B**Ehold here then (my dear Philothea) the meditations requisite for our purpose; which when thou hast ended, go on courageously in the spirit of humilitie to make thy generall confession. But I pray thee suffer not thy self to be troubled with any kind of apprehension. The Scorpion which hath stung us is venomous in stinging, but being reduced into oyl becomes a sovereign remedie against his own sting. Sinne is onely shamefull in the committing; but being converted into confession & repentance it becometh both honourable and wholesome: Contrition and Confession are so precious, and so savoury, that they deface the ugliness, and disperse the loathsomnesse of sin. Simon the leper judged M. Magdalene a sinner, but our Saviour denied it, and spake of nothing but the sweet perfumes which she poured forth, and of the greatnesse of her charity. If we be truly humble, O Philothea, our sinnes will infinitely displease us, because God is offended by them; but the accusation of our sins will be sweet and pleasant to us, because God is honoured thereby. It is a kind of

ease to us to acquaint the physician rightly with the disease that tormenteth us.

2. When thou shalt be before thy ghostly father, imagine thy self upon mount Calvarie, kneeling right under the feet of Jesus Christ crucified, whose precious blood streams down on all sides to wash thee from thy iniquities. For although it be not the very blood of our Saviour, yet it is the merit of his blood shed for us, which watereth abundantly the souls of the penitents in every Confessionary. Open then thy heart freely to let out thy sins by confession; for as fast as they go out, the precious merits of his divine passion will enter in to replenish it with blessings.

3. But be sure to declare all, simply, and plainly. Fully satisfie thy conscience in this now once for all; which done, then hearken to the advertisements and ordinances of thy ghostly father, and say in thy heart, *Speak Lord, for thy servant hearkeneth unto thee: yea (Philothea) it is God whom thou hearest, since he hath said to his vicars, he that heareth you, heareth me.*

4. After that, take in hand this protestation following, which serveth for a conclusion of all thy contrition, and which thou oughtest first to have meditated and considered. Reade it attentively, and with the greatest feeling that possibly thou canst.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XX.

*An authentick protestation, to engrave in our soul, a firm resolution to serve God, and to conclude the acts of Penitence.*

**I.** Under written, placed in the presence of God everlasting, and of all the court of heaven, having considered the exceeding mercy of his divine goodnesse towards me most unworthy and wretched creature, whom he hath created of nothing, preserved, sustained, and delivered from so many dangers, and laden with so many benefits; but above all, having considered the incomprehensible sweetnesse and clemency wherewith this most good God hath so graciously spared me in my iniquities, so frequently inspired me, inviting me to amendment, and so patiently expecting my repentance and conversion untill this N. year of my age, notwithstanding all my ingratitude, disloyalty, and infidelitie; whereby deferring my conversion, and despising his graces, I have so unadvisedly offended him: having moreover considered, that upon the day of my holy Baptisme I was so happily, and holily vowed, and dedicated to my God, to be his child, and that contrary to the profession which then was made in my name, I have so many times so execrably, and detestably profaned and

violated my understanding, applying and imploying it against his divine Majestie. At length returning to my self, prostrate in heart and mind before the throne of the divine justice, I acknowledge, confesse, and avow my self lawfully attainted, and convicted of high treason against his divine Majestie, and guilty of the death and passion of Jesus Christ, by reason of the sins which I have committed, for which he died and suffered the torments of the Crosse; so that consequently, I am worthy to be cast away, and damned for ever.

2. But turning my self towards the throne of the infinite mercy of the same eternall God, having detested from the bottome of my heart, and with all my force the transgressions of my past life; I most humbly begg, and crave pardon, grace, and mercy, with intire absolution from my offence, by virtue of the death and passion of the same Saviour and Redeemer of my soul: upon which relying, as upon the onely foundation of my hope, I confirm again, and renew the sacred profession of my alleigeance made in my behalf to God at my Baptisme; renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh, abominating their horrible suggestions, vanities, and concupiscences for all the time of this present life, and for all eternitie. And converting my self unto  
my

my most gracious and mercifull God, I desire, deliberate, purpose, and resolve irrevocably to serve and love him now and for ever : and to this end, I give and consecrate to him my spirit with all its faculties , my soul with all her powers , my heart with all its affections, and my body with all its senses ; protesting never more to abuse any part of my being against his divine will and soveraign Majestie , to whom I offer up, and sacrifice my self in spirit, to be perpetually a loyall, obedient, & faithful creature, without ever unsaying, revolting, or repēting me of this resolution.

3. But if (alas!) by the suggestion of my enemy, or through humane frailty I chance to transgresse in any thing whatsoever this my vow and resolution, I protest and determine from this verie houre, by the assistance of the holy Ghost, to rise again so soon as I shall perceive my fall, and return anew to the divine mercie without any delay or protraction whatsoever. This is my will, intention, and resolution inviolable and irrevocable, which I advow, and confirm without reservation or exception, in the same sacred presence of my God, and in the sight of the triumphant Church, and in the face of the Church militant, my mother, who heareth this my declaration in the person of him, who

as her officer heareth me in this action.

4. Let it please thee, O my eternall God, almightie, and gracious Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to confirm me in this resolution; and to accept this my cordiall and inward sacrifice, in the odour of sweetnesse. And as it hath pleased thee to give me the inspiration and will to do this; so grant me also necessary force, and grace to perform it. O my God, thou art my God, God of my heart, God of my soul, and God of my spirit; so I acknowledge, and adore thee now and for ever. Live O Jesu.

#### CHAP. XXI.

*The conclusion for this first Purgation.*

I. **T**HIS protestation ended, be attentive, and open the ears of thy heart to hear in spirit the words of thy absolution, which the Saviour of thy soul himself, sitting upon the throne of his mercy, will pronounce above in Heaven before all his Angels and Saints, at the same time that the Priest in his name doth absolve thee beneath on earth. So that all the troupe of the blessed souls, rejoycing at this thy happinesse, will sing a spirituall hymne with incomparable joy, and give the kisse of peace, and fellowship to thy heart now  
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sanctified and reestablished in grace.

2. O God, Philothea, behold this admirable contract, by which thou makest a happy league with the Majestie of God, since in giving thy self to him thou gainest both him, and thy self for life everlasting. It remaineth onely to take pen in hand, and subscribe with a joyfull heart the act of thy protestation, and so go to the Altar, where God on the other side will reciprocally sign, and seal thy absolution, and the promise he will make thee of the kingdome of heaven, putting himself by his venerable sacrament, as a seal and sacred signet upon thy renewed heart.

3. Thus I hope, Philothea, thy soul will be purged from sin, and all sinfull affections. Yet because these affections doe easily return unto the soul through our frailtie and concupiscence, which may well be mortified but can never die while we live here on earth; I will give thee some instructions, which being well practised shall preserve thee hereafter from mortall sin, and from all affections thereof, so that it shall never take root in thy heart. And because the same instructions serve also for a more perfect purification; before I deliver them, I will say somewhat of this more absolute puritie, whereto I desire to conduct thee.

CHAP.



## CHAP. XXII.

*That we must purifie our selves from the affections which we have to veniall sins.*

1. **As** the day-light encreases, we see more clearly in the glasse the spots and blemishes of our faces: even so as the inward light of the holy Ghost more and more illuminates our consciences, we see more plainly and distinctly the sins, the inclinations, and imperfections which hinder us from attaining to true devotion; and the self same light which causeth us to discover those spots and deformities, enflameth us likewise with desire to cleanse and purge us from them.

2. Thou shalt then discover, my dear Philothea, that besides mortall sins, and the affections to them, (from which by the afore-mentioned exercises thou hast been purged) there remain yet in thy soul diverse inclinations and affections to veniall sins.

3. I do not say thou shalt discover veniall sins, but affections and inclinations to them. Now the one is far different from the other; for we can never be altogether free from veniall sins, (at least to continue in that puritie for any long time) but we may well be without all affections to veniall sins; for it is one thing to lie once or  
twice

twice merrily in matters of small importance, and another thing to take pleasure in lying, and to bear an affection to this kind of sin.

4. I say then, that it is necessary to purge the soul from all affections and inclinations to venial sins; that is to say, we must not nourish voluntarily a will to continue and persevere in any kind of venial sin: for it would be too great a baseness to keep wittingly in our conscience a thing so displeasing to God as the will to displease him. Venial sin, be it never so little, displeaseth God, though not so highly that he will reject or damn us for it. If then venial sin displease him, the will and affection to venial sin is no other thing then a resolution to displease his divine Majesty. And is it possible that a generous soul should not onely displease his God, but also affect to displease him?

5. Such affections, my Philothea, are directly contrarie to devotion, as affections to mortall sins are to charitie; they weaken the forces of the spirit, binder the course of divine consolations, open a gate to renervations, and although they kil not the soul, yet they make it exceeding sick. *Dead flies* (saith the wise man) *marr the sweetness of an oyntment*: he would say, that flies staying not long upon the oyntment, but eating

eating it in passing by, they spoyle no more then they take, the rest remaining good; but when they die in the ointment, they deprive it of its virtue, and leave it nothing worth: So venial sins entering into a devout soul, and staying not long there do not much prejudice it; but if the same sins remain in the soul by the affection which she takes to them, they make her without doubt to loose the sweetnesse of the ointment, that is, holy devotion.

6. Spiders kill not the Bees, but they spoil and corrupt their honie, and so entangle their combs with their webs that they cannot go forward in their work; this is to be understood when the spiders make their abode among them: So venial sin killeth not our soul, but it spoyleth devotion, and pesters the powers of our soul with such depraved customes and inclinations, that it can no more exercise charitie with promptitude, in which devotion consists; but this is to be understood when venial sin makes abode in our conscience by the affection which we bear to it

7. It is but a small matter, Philothea, to tell some trivial lie, to exceed a little in words, in actions, in looks, in apparell, in mirth, in play, in dancing, so that, as soon as these spirituall spiders are entered into our consciences, we chase, and hunt them

them away, as the Bees do the corporall spiders : but if we permit them to stay in our hearts, and not onely this, but if we affect to retain and multiply them there, we shall soon find our hony destroyed, and the hive of our conscience pestered and spoyled. But I say once again, what likelihood is there that a noble soul should take pleasure in displeasing God, and delight in becoming offensive to him, or desire to do that which she knoweth to be a vexation to him ?

### CHAP. XXIII.

*That we ought to purifie our selves from  
affections to unprofitable and dan-  
gerous things.*

**I.** GAMING, masking, feasting, gallantry, comedies, of themselves are no way hurtfull, but indifferent, and may be used both well and ill; yet notwithstanding these things are dangerous, and to bear an affection to them is yet more dangerous. I say then, Philothea, that although it be lawfull to play, to daunce, to deck and adorn thy self, to be present at honest comedies, to banquet; yet to delight in such things is contrary to devotion, and very offensive and dangerous. It is no sin to do such things, but it is sin to affect them. It is pittie to sowe in the garden of our heart,

heart such vain and foolish affections, which take up the room of virtuous impressions, and hinder the sap of our souls from nourishing good inclinations.

2. The ancient Nazirites abstained not only from all that which might inebriate, but also from grapes, not that the grape maketh drunk, but because it was to be feared that tasting the grape they would be tempted to drink the wine. I denie not but we may use sometimes these dangerous things, but I avow that we can never affect them without prejudice to devotion. The Stags when they find themselves too fat, retire to the bushes, knowing that being burdened with their own weight, they are not able to run if they should be hunted. The heart of man over-charged with these superfluous, unprofitable, and perilous affections, cannot run after God readily, swiftly, and lightly, which is the principall point of devotion.

3. Little children delight and heat themselves in catching butter-flies, and none think it ill in them because they be little children: but is it not a ridiculous, nay rather a lamentable thing to see men amuse & busie themselves about such unworthy toies and trifles as those which I have named? which besides their unprofitableness, put us in danger of committing disorders  
and

and exorbitances in their pursuit. Wherefore, my dear Philothea, I say that we must necessarily purge our selves from these affections ; for though the acts be not alwaies contrary to devotion, yet the affections are alwaies prejudicial to it.

#### CHAP. XXIV.

*That we must purge our selves from corrupt inclinations.*

I. **W**E have yet moreover, Philothea, certain natural inclinations, which, because they proceed not from our particular sins, are not properly sins, neither mortal nor venial, but are called imperfections, and their acts are termed faults and omissions. For example, S. Paula, according to the relation of S. Hierom, had a great inclination to grief and sadness, so that at the death of her children and husband she run hazard to die with sorrow ; this was an imperfection, but no sin, since she had it against her will.

2. There are some naturally chearfull, others froward ; some hard to receive advise, others inclined to indignation ; some prone to choler, others to love ; and in summe, there are few persons in whom some such imperfection may not be observed. Now although they be, as it were, proper and natural to every one, yet by a  
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care and contrary affection they may be moderated and corrected, yea and we may altogether purge and deliver our selves from them.

3. And I tell thee, Philothea, it is necessarie to do so. Men have found the meanes to change bitter Almond trees into sweet, onely by piercing them near the root to let out their juyce: and why may not we then let out our perverse inclinations, and become better? There is no so good nature which may not be corrupted by vicious cUSTOMES; nor so perverse that may not, first by the grace of God, and next by good industry and diligence, be reduced and overcome.

4. I will therefore now give thee the instructions, and propose the exercises by which thou maist purge thy soul from dangerous affections, from imperfections, and all affections to venial sins, and secure thy conscience also more and more against all mortal sin. God give thee his grace to practise them well.

# THE SECOND PART OF THE INTRODUCTION, Containing advices for the elevation of the soul to God by prayer and the Sacraments.

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## CHAP. I.

### *Of the necessity of Prayer.*

1. **P**Rayer placing our understanding in the clearnesse of the divine light, and exposing our will to the heat of heavenly love, there is nothing that so much purgeth our understanding from ignorance, and our will from depraved affections. It is the water of benediction, the sprinkling whereof makes green and flourishing the plants of our good desires, washeth our soules from imperfections, and quencheh passions in our heart.

2. But above all, I recommend to thee mental and cordial prayer, and especially that which hath for its subject the life and passion of our Lord; for beholding him often by meditation, thy soul will be filled with him, thou wilt learn his carriage, and frame thy actions according to the modell of his. He is the light of the world; it is then in him, by him, and for him, that we must be guided, and illuminated



nated. He is the tree of desire, under the shadow of which we must refresh our selves : he is the living fountain of Jacob to wash away all our stains. In fine, as little children, by hearing their mothers, and by prating with them, learn to speak; so we conversing with our Saviour by meditation, and observing his words, his works, and his affections, shall soon by help of his grace learn to speak, work, and will like him. We must stop here, Philothea, and believe me, we cannot go to God the Father but through this gate: for even as the looking glasse cannot terminate our sight, unlesse the back be tinued or leaded : so the divinity could not well be contemplated by us in this world, if it were not joyned to the sacred humanity of our Saviour, whose life and death is the most proportionable, delightfull, sweeter, and profitable object that we can choose for our ordinary meditation. 'Tis not for nothing that our Saviour called himself the bread descended from heaven; for as bread is to be eaten with all sorts of meats, so our Saviour must be meditated, considered, and sought after in all our prayers and actions. His life and death have been disposed and distributed into divers points by many authours, to serve for meditation : those whom I counsell thee

thee to use are S. Bonaventure, Bellintan, Bruno, Capilia, Granada, Du Pont.

3. Employ in it every day an hour before dinner, if it may be at the beginning of the morning, for then shalt thou find thy spirit lesse troubled, and more fresh after the repose of the night. But spend no more then an hour, unlesse thy spiritual father expressly command it.

4. If thou canst perform this exercise in the Church, and find sufficient tranquillity there, it would be the most commodious place for thee, because neither father nor mother, wife nor husband, nor any other whosoever can well hinder thee from staying one hour in the Church; whereas, being in subjection, thou canst not perchance assure thy self to have an hour so free in thy own house.

5. Begin all thy prayers, be they mental or vocal, with the presence of God: keep this rule without exception, and in short time thou wilt perceive what profit thou shalt reap by it.

6. If thou wilt believe me, say thy *Pater, Ave, and Creed* in Latine; but learn likewise to understand well the words of them in thine own language: to the end that saying them in the common language of the Church, thou maist neverthelesse relish the admirable and delicious sense of those

those holy prayers: which thou must say, fixing profoundly thy thoughts, and stirring up thy affections upon the sense of them; not striving to say many, but taking care to say those thou dost say from thy heart; for one only *Pater* said with devotion, is more worth then many hastily and cursorily repeated.

7. The Beades are a most profitable kind of praying, if they be used as they ought; and to that end, provide thy self some of those little treatises which teach the way of repeating them. It is good also to say the Letanies of our Saviour, of our Ladie, of the Saints, and other such vocal prayers as are in approved manuals and primmers; yet with this caution, that if thou hast the gift of mentall prayer, thou alwaies reserve for that the principall place: so that if afterward, either for multiplicitie of businesse, or for any other respect, thou canst not say thy vocal prayers, be not therefore troubled, but rest content to say onely before or after thy meditations the *Pater, Ave, and Creed*.

8. If in making thy vocal prayers thou feel thy heart invited to inward or mental prayer, refuse it not, but let thy spirit turn gently that way: and trouble not thy self for not finishing thy vocal prayers which thou didst intend; for the mental prayer  
which

which thou hast made instead thereof, is as pleasing to God, and much more profitable for thy soul. I except the office of the Church, if thou be bound to say it; for that dutie must not be neglected.

9. If it should happen, that all the morning should passe away without this sacred exercise of mental prayer, either by the multitude of thy affaires, or any other cause, (which thou oughtest to prevent as much as is possible) endeavour to repair this losse after dinner, in some hour longest after meat; because doing it presently after eating, before digestion be well made, drowinesse will come on, and thy health would be prejudiced thereby.

10. But if all the day long thou canst not do it, recompence the losse at least by multiplying ejaculatory prayers, and by reading some book of devotion, with some penance for future prevention of this fault; and therewithal make a firm resolution to reduce thy self into order the day following.

## CHAP. II.

*A brief method of meditation. And first of the presence of God, which is the first point of preparation.*

1. But perhaps, Philothea, thou knowest

est not how to make mental prayer, for it is a thing wherewith in this unhappy age few are acquainted. And for this cause I present thee a brief & simple method to that end; untill by reading many good books composed upon this subject, and above all by use, thou maist be more amply instructed.

2. And first I prescribe thee the Preparation, which consisteth in two points; whereof the first is, to place thy self in the presence of God; and the second, to invoke his assistance. Now to place thy self in the presence of God, I propound to thee four principal means, wherewith thou maist help thy self in this thy beginning.

3. The first consisteth in a lively and attentive apprehension of the general presence of God; that is to say, to conceive that God is in all, and every place, and that there is neither place, nor thing in the world, wherein he is not most assuredly present: So that as the birds, wheresoever they flie, alwaies encounter the ayr; so where ever we go, or where ever we be, we find God still present.

4. Every one knoweth this truth, but every one is not attentive to comprehend it. Blind men, who see not the Prince present with them, omit not to behave themselves with respect, when they are admonished of his presence; but the truth is,  
because

because they see him not, they easily forget that he is present, and forgetting him, more easily omit their respect and reverence.

5. Alas, Philothea, we see not God who is present with us : and though faith gives us notice of his presence, yet not seeing him with our eyes, we often forget him, and then behave our selves as though God were very farre from us. For although we well know that he is present in all things, yet not reflecting on it, it is the same as if we knew it not.

6. Therefore ever before prayer we must stirre up our soul to an attentive apprehension, and consideration of Gods presence: So did David, when he cried out ; *If I ascend into Heaven, O my God, thou art there: If I descend into Hell, thou art there.* Also we must use the words of Jacob, who having seen the holy ladder said, *O how dreadfull is this place ! verily God is here, and I knew it not:* that is he was not aware of it ; for he was not ignorant that God was in all, and every where.

7. When thou comest then to prayer, say in thy heart, and also to thy heart, *O my heart, my heart, God is truly near.*

8. The second means to place thy self in this sacred presence is, to think that God is not onely in the place where thou art, but

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that

that he is by a most particular manner in thy heart, and in the very bottom of thy mind, which he quickeneth and animateth with his divine presence, being there as the heart of thy heart, and the spirit of thy spirit. For as thy soul being diffused through all thy body is present in every part thereof, and yet is in a more speciall manner present in the heart: so likewise God being most present in all things, assisteth notwithstanding in a more particular manner in our spirit. For this cause David calleth God, *the God of his heart*: and S. Paul sayeth, *that we live, we move, and we are in God*. In consideration then of this truth, stirre up in thy heart a great reverence towards God, who is there so intimately present.

9. The third means is, to consider our Saviour, who in his humanity beholdeth from heaven all persons in the world, but especially Christians, who are his children, and most particularly such as are in prayer, whose actions and behaviour he observeth. And this is not a simple imagination, but an infallible truth: for although we see not him, yet he from above seeth us. S. Stephen saw him in the time of his martyrdom. So that we may truly say with the Spouse; *Behold him there behind the wall: see where he is looking through the windows, beholding through the lattice.*

10. The

10. The fourth means consisteth in helping our selves with simple imagination, representing to our thoughts our Saviour in his sacred humanitie, as if he were hard by us, as we are wont to represent our friends to our fancie, and to say, me thinks I see such an one doing this or that, it seems to me that I see him, or some such thing. But if the venerable Sacrament of the Altar were present, then this presence were reall, and not by meer imagination; for the species and appearance of bread would be as a tapestrie, behind which our Lord being really present, seeth and observeth us, though we see not him in his own likenesse. Use then one of these four means of placing thy soul in the presence of God before prayer: but they must not be all employed at one time; one at once, and that briefly and simply will suffice.

### CHAP. III.

*Of invocation, the second point of Preparation.*

1. **I**NVocation is made in this manner. Thy soul, remembering that she is in the presence of God, prostrateth her self with profound reverence, acknowledging her self most unworthy to appear before so sovereigna Majesty; yet knowing that his goodness will have it so, she humbly demandeth



grace of him to serve him well, and to adore him in this meditation.

2. If thou wilt, thou mayst use some short, and efficacious words; such as these of holy David: *Cast me not (O God) from thy face: take not from me the favour of thy spirit. Suffer thy face to shine upon thy servant, and I will consider thy marvels. Give me understanding, and I will ponder thy law, and keep it with all my heart. I am thy servant, give me understanding: and such like.*

3. It would be good also to call upon thy good Angel, and upon the sacred persons which are concerned in the mystérie on which thou doest meditate. As for example, in the meditation of the death of our Lord thou maist invoke our blessed Lady, S. John, S. M. Magdalene, and the good thief; that the inward touchings, and motions which they received, may be likewise communicated unto thee. So in the meditation of thine own death, thou maist invoke thy good Angel-Guardian, (who will be present with thee) desiring him to inspire thee with convenient considerations. Do the like in other mysteries.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the third point of preparation, consisting in proposing the mystery which we mean to meditate.*

1. **A**FTER these two ordinary points of preparation, there is a third, which is not common to all sorts of meditations; which some call the forming or figuring of the place, or an interiour lecture. And this is nothing else, but to represent unto thy imagination the substance of the mystérie which thou wilt meditate, as though it were acted really and truly in thy presence. For example, if thou wouldest meditate on our Lord upon the Crosse, imagine thy self to be upon mount Calvarie, and that there thou beholdest, and hearest all that was done or said in the passion of our Lord; or if thou wilt, (for it is all one) imagine to thy self, that in the very place where thou art, they crucifie our Saviour, in such manner as the holy Evangelists describe.

2. The like may be done when thou wilt meditate of death, as I have noted in the meditation thereof; and likewise in the meditation of Hell, and such like mysteries, in which visible, and sensible things may be represented: for as concerning other mysteries, as those of the greatnesse of God, of

the excellency of virtue, of the end for which we were created, which are invisible things, we cannot use this kind of imagination. True it is, we may use some similitude, or comparison to help our meditation; but that is done with some difficulty, and my meaning is to deal with thee so plainly, that thy spirit be not wearied in searching out inventions.

3. Now by means of this imagination we retain our spirit within the mysterie which we mean to meditate, to the end it range not idly hither, and thither; even as we shut up a bird in a cage, or as we tie a hawk by her leash, that so she may abide upon the hand.

4. Yet some will tell thee, that it is better to use a simple imagination of faith, and a meer apprehension altogether mentall, and spirituall in the representation of these mysteries; or else to imagine that those things are acted in thine own understanding. But these wayes are too subtil for beginners; and therefore untill such time as God shall raise thee higher, I counsell thee, Philothea, to keep in this low valley which I have shewed thee.

#### CHAP. V.

*Of Considerations, which are the second part  
Of Meditation.*

I. **A**fter the acts of Imagination, follow the

the acts of our understanding, which we call meditation, and is no other thing but one or many considerations, made to stir up our affections to God, and godly things. For in this meditation is different from studie, and from other thoughts and considerations, which are not made to obtain virtue, or the love of God, but for other respects and intentions, as to become learned, to write, or dispute. Having then limited thy understanding (as I have said) within the bounds of the subject which thou wilt meditate, either by imagination if the matter be sensible, or by a simple proposition of it if it be insensible; begin to make considerations thereupon, according to the examples which thou maist see ready framed in the meditations above written. And if thy soul find sufficient satisfaction, light, and fruit in any one of the considerations; stay there without going further, doing as the bees, which never leave the flower so long as they find any honey to be sucked out of it: But if thou find not the successe according to thy desire in one point, having turned, and wound it in thy imagination, proceed to another; but be sure to go on sweetly, and plainly in this businesse, without tiring thy self too much.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of Affections and resolutions, the third part of Meditation.*

1. **M**editation infuseth good motions into our will, or the affective part of our soul; such as are the love of God, and of our neighbour, the desire of heaven, & of glorie, zeal of the salvation of souls, imitation of the life of our Lord, compassion, admiration, joy, fear of displeasing God, of judgement, of Hell, hatred of sin, confidence in the goodnesse and mercy of God, and shame for our wicked life past. And in these affections our spirit should spread, and extend it self as farre as is possible. And if thou desire to be helped in this, reade the first tome of the meditations of Andrew Capillia, in the preface, where he sheweth the manner of dilating these affections; and more largely, father Arias in his treatise of Prayer.

2. Yet thou must not long dwell upon these generall affections, without descending to speciall and particular resolutions for thy correction and amendment. For example, the first word that our Lord spake upon the Crosse, will doublelesse stir up in thy soul a good affection of imitation, as a desire to pardon thine enemies, and to love them; but this is to small purpose, if thou add not

to it a particular resolution in this manner: Well then, I will not hereafter be angrie at such or such words, which such or such persons, as my neighbour, or my servant shall say of me; nor be sensible of this or that affront, which such or such a person shall put upon me; but rather I will say, or do such and such a thing to gain him, and sweeten him towards me. And by this means, Philothea, thou shalt correct thy defects in verie short time: whereas by affections onely, amendment will be but hardly, and slowly made.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the conclusion, and spirituall poſſe.*

1. LAST of all, we must conclude our meditation by three acts, which must be done with the greatest humilitie that we can. The first is, thanksgiving to God for the holy affections and resolutions which he hath given us, and for his goodnesse and mercie, which we have discovered in the myſterie of our meditation.

2. The second is, an oblation, whereby we offer to God his own goodnesse and mercy, the death, bloud and merits of his onely Son, and jointly with them our affections, and resolutions.

3. The third is, a petition or supplication, by which we demand of God, and

conjure him to communicate unto us the graces and virtues of his Son, and to bless our affections and resolutions, to the end we may faithfully put it in execution. Then, likewise we pray for the Church, for our Country, Pastours, Parents, friends and others ; employing to that end, the intercession of our blessed Lady, of the Angels, and Saints. Lastly, I have advised that thou shouldst say a *Pater*, and *Ave*, which is the generall and necessarie prayer of all the faithfull.

4. To all this I have added, that thou shouldest gather a little nosegay of devotion. My meaning is this. Such as have been walking in a pleasant garden go not willingly from thence , without gathering foure or five flowers to smell to, and keep in their hands all the day after : Even so, when our mind hath discoursed by meditation upon some mystery, we should chuse one, or two, or three points, which we have found most proper for our advancement, upon which we might busie our mind, and spiritually smell to them all the rest of the day. And this must be done in the self same place where we made our meditation, walking alone , and entertaining our thoughts some short time after.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Certain profitable instructions upon the  
subject of meditation.*

1. Above all things, Philothea, when thou risest from thy meditation, remember the resolutions; and deliberations which thou hast taken, and put them in practise that day. This is the chiefest fruit of Meditation, without which oft times it is not onely unprofitable but hurtfull; for virtues meditated, and not practised, puffed up the mind, and make us think that we are such in deed as we resolved to be: which doubtless is true when our resolutions are lively and solid; but they are not such, but rather vain and dangerous, if they be not practised. We must therefore trie all means, and seek all occasions, little or great, of putting our resolutions in execution. For example, if I resolved by mildnesse to win the minds of such as have offended me, I must endeavour this day to meet with them, and salute them courteously; or if I cannot meet with them, to speak well of them, and to pray to God for them.

2. Having finished this mentall prayer, take heed that thou give not thy heart a jog, lest thou spill the balm which thou hast received by meanes of thy prayer. My meaning is, that for sometime, if it be



be possible, thou keep thy self silent, and fair and softly remove thy heart from thy prayers to thy worldly businesse, retaining so long as thou art able the feeling and affection which thou hast conceived. A man that hath got some precious liquour in a fair porcellane dish to carrie home to his house, will go fair and softly, never looking aside, but sometimes before him for fear of stumbling, sometimes upon his dish for fear of spilling the liquour: even so must thou do, having ended thy meditation, withdraw not thy self all at once, but look well before thee. As for example, if thou meet with any one whom thou art obliged to hear, or to speak to, there is no remedie, thou must accommodate thy self to that, yet in such sort that thou have regard also to thy heart, that as little of the liquour of this holy prayer be spilt as may be.

3. Accustome thy self to passe from prayer to all kind of businesse, which thy vocation, and profession justly, and lawfully requireth of thee, be they never so different from the affections which thou hast received in prayer. So let the Advocate learn to passe from prayer to pleading; the Merchant to his traffick; the married woman to her houswifrie, and care of her familie, with that sweetnesse and tranquil-

tranquillity, as their minds be not troubled or vexed therewith : For since the one and the other are according to the will of God, we must learn to go from the one to the other with an humble and devout spirit.

4. Manie times immediately after preparation thy affection will run in a full carriere towards God; and then, Philothea, thou must let go the bridle, without keeping that method which I have set down. For although ordinarily consideration ought to go before affection and resolution, yet neverthelesse when the holy Ghost giveth affections together with consideration, thou must not then seek consideration, since that serves for no other end but to stir up the affection. In a word, whensoever affections offer themselves, receive them, and make room for them, whither they come before or after considerations. And although I have placed affections after all considerations, I have done it onely to distinguish more plainly the parts of prayer ; for otherwise it is a generall rule, never to bridle thy affections, but alwaies to let them have their free course. And this is to be understood, not onely of the other affections, but also of thanksgiving, oblation, and petition, which may likewise be used together with the considerations,

considerations, for they must no more be restrained then the other affections. But as for resolutions, they are alwaies to be made after affections, and at the end of all meditation, before the conclusion; because, they representing to us particular, and familiar objects, would put us in danger of great distraction if we should confound them with our affections.

5. Amongst these affections and resolutions, it is good to use words, and to speak sometimes to God, sometimes to the Angels, and persons represented in the mysteries, sometimes to the Saints, and sometimes to our selves, to our own heart, to sinners, yea, and to insensible creatures; as we see David doth in his Psalms, and other devout Saints in their prayers and Meditations.

## CHAP. I X.

### *Of drynesse which often happeneth in Meditation.*

1. **I**F it happen that thou find no pleasure or comfort in thy meditation, I conjure thee neverthelesse, Philothea, not to afflict thy self, but sometimes open the door to words, and bewail thy self to our Saviour, confesse thy unworthinesse, and desire him to be thy helper. Kisse his image, if thou hast it, and say to him these words of Jacob;

cob ; I will not leave thee Lord untill thou hast given me thy blessing : Or those of the Cananean woman ; yea Lord, I am a dogg, but yet doggs do eat the crums that fall from their masters table.

2. At other times take some spirituall book in thy hand, read it with attention, untill such time as thy spirit be awakened, and returned to thee. Stirre up thy heart sometimes with outward gestures, and motions of devotion, prostrating thy self upon the ground, crossing thine arms before thy breast, embracing a crucifix : which exterior acts are onely to be used when thou art alone, in some secret place.

3. But if after all this thou obtainest no comfort, be the drinesse never so great, afflict not thy self, but continue to keep thy self in a devout posture before Almighty God. How many Courtiers be there that go a hundred times in the year into the Princes chamber, without hope of once speaking with him, but onely to be seen of him, and to render their duty to him ? So must we, my dear Philothea, come to the exercise of prayer, purely and meerly to do our duty, and to testifie our fidelity. If it please his Divine Majestie to speak, and discourse with us by his holy inspirations, and interiour consolations, it will be doubtlesse an inestimable honour to us, and a pleasure

pleasure above all pleasures; but if it please him not to do us this favour, leaving us without so much as speaking to us, as if he saw us not, or as if we were not in his presence, we must not for all that go our way, but continue with decent and devout behaviour in the presence of his sovereign goodnesse, and then infallibly our patience will be acceptable unto him, and he will take notice of our diligence and perseverance; so that another time when we shall come before him, he will favour us, and passe his time with us in heavenly consolations, and make us see the beautie of this holy prayer. Yet if he should not shew us his favour, let us content our selves, Philothea, it is too great an honour to be in his sight and presence.

## CHAP. X.

### *A morning Exercise.*

I. BESIDES this main exercise of mentall prayer, and the other vocall prayers which thou oughtest to perform once every day, there are five other sorts of shorter prayers, which are as it were branches of the other principall prayer. Amongst which the first is that we use to make every morning, as a generall preparation to all the actions of the day, which thou must make in this wise.

2. Give

2. Give thanks to God, and adore him profoundly, for the favour that he hath done thee in preserving thee the night passed; and if in it thou hast committed any sin, crave pardon of him for it.

3. Consider that this present day is given thee, that in it thou mayest gain the future day of eternity in heaven; and make a stedfast purpose to employ the day well to this intention.

4. Forecast with thy self what businesse, what opportunity, and what occasions thou maist meet with this day to serve God; and what temptations may befall thee to offend him, either by anger, or by vanity, or by any other disorder: and prepare thy self with a holy resolution to employ diligently those means which shall occur to thee to serve God, and to profit thee in devotion: as also on the other side, dispose thy self carefully to eschew, resist, and vanquish that which may present it self prejudicial to thy salvation, and the glory of God.

5. Now it is not enough to make this resolution, but thou must withall prepare the means to put it in execution: for example; If I foresee that I am to treat of businesse with one that is subject to passion, and prompt to choler, I will not only resolve to refrain from giving him offence,  
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but I will prepare milde words to prevent him, or use the assistance of some person that may temper him : If I foresee that I shall visite some sick body, I will appoint the hour, and prepare the succours, and comforts which I am to afford him; and so of other occasions.

6. This done, humble thy self before God, acknowledging that of thy self thou canst do nothing of that which thou hast deliberated, be it to avoid evil, or to do good. And, as if thou didst hold thy heart in thy hands, offer it with all thy good designs unto the divine Majestie, intreating him to take it into his protection, and to strengthen it, that it may go on prosperously in his service, using these, or the like interiour words ; O my Lord, behold here this my poor miserable heart, that through thy goodnesse hath received many pious affections; but alas ! it is of it self too weak, and feeble to execute the good which it desireth, unlesse thou impart to it thy heavenly blessing; which for this end I humbly crave of thee, O Father of goodnesse, by the merit of the passion of thy Son, unto whose honour I consecrate this day, and the residue of my life. Then call upon our B. Lady, upon thy good Angel, and the Saints, to the end they may all assist thee to this effect.

7. But

7. But all these spiritual actions must be done briefly, and efficaciously, before thou go out of thy chamber, if it be possible, that by meanes of this exercise all that thou art to do the whole day following may be watered with the blessing of God: and I pray thee Philothea, never to fail herein.

### CHAP. XI.

*An exercise for Evening: And of the examination of our conscience.*

1. **AS** before thy corporal dinner thou must make a spiritual dinner by meditation: So likewise before thy supper make a little supper, or at least a spirituall and devout collation. Gain then some time a little before supper, and prostrate thy self before God; recollect thy spirit to the meditation of thy Lord Jesus Christ crucified; (whom thou maiest represent to thy self by a simple consideration, and an interiour view) kindle again the fire of thy morning Meditation, by a dozen of lively aspirations, humiliations, and amorous ejaculations towards this divine Saviour of thy soul; or else, by repeating those points of thy morning Meditation which were most pleasing to thee, or by stirring up thy devotion upon some new spiritual subject as thou shalt like best.

2. Touching



2. Touching the examination of our conscience, which must alwaies be done immediately before we go to bed, every one knoweth how it is to be performed.

1. We give thanks to God for having preserved us the day past. 2. We examine how we have behaved our selves in every hour of the day: and to do this more easily, we must consider where, with whom, and in what we have been employed. 3. If we find that we have done any good, we must give God thanks for it; and contrariwise, if we have done any evil in thoughts, words, or deeds, we must ask pardon of his Divine Majestie, with a true resolution to confesse it at the first occasion, and to amend it carefully. 4. After this, we commend unto his Divine providence our soul and body, the holy Church, our parents, and friends; we pray our Lady, our Angel-guardian, and the Saints, that they would watch over us, and for us: and so with the blessing of God, we go to take that rest which he hath ordained for us.

3. This exercise must never be forgotten, no more then that of the Morning; for by that of the Morning thou openest the windowes of thy soul to the Sunne of justice; and by this of the Evening, thou shuttest them against infernal darknesse.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.  
*Of spiritual recollection.*

IT is here, dear Philothea, that I wish thee most affectionately to follow my counsel; for in this article consisteth one of the most assured means of thy spiritual advancement.

1. As often as thou canst in the day time recall thy soul home to the presence of God, by one of the four means mentioned above. Observe what God doth, and what thou dost, and thou shalt find his eyes turned towards thee, and perpetually fixed upon thee by an incomparable love. O God, maist thou say, wherefore do I not look alwaies upon thee, as thou alwaies lokest upon me? wherefore thinkest thou so much upon me, O my Lord, and wherefore think I so little upon thee? Where are we, O my soul? our proper place is God, and where is it that we find our selves?

2. As birds have their nests upon trees to retire to when they are weary; and Deer have bushes, and thickets wherein to hide, and shroud themselves, and to take the cool of the shadow in the summer: Even so, Philothea, should our hearts choose out every day some place, either upon mount Calvarie, or in the wounds  
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of our Redeemer, or in some other place near him, there to make our spiritual retreat upon every occasion, there to recreate and refresh our selves amidst the turmoiles of exteriour affaires, and there to be as in a castle, to defend our selves against temptations. Blessed is that soul that can truly say to God, *thou art my house of refuge, my secure rampier, my defence against rain and tempests, my shadow, and shelter against all heat.*

3. Remember then, Philothea, to make every day sundry retreats in the solitary closet of thy heart, whilest thou art outwardly busied in temporal affaires and conversations: this mental solitude cannot be hindered by the companie of such as are about thee; for they are not about thy heart, but about thy body, so that thy heart remaineth all alone, in the presence of God alone. This is the retreat which King David made, amidst so many businesses, as he testifieth in a thousand places of his Psalmes: *O Lord, as for me, I am alwaies with thee. I behold God alwayes before me. I have lifted up mine eyes to thee, O my God, that dwellest in heaven. Mine eyes are alwaies towards God.*

4. And again, our conversations ordinarily are not so serious, but that we may sometimes withdraw our heart to retire it  
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into our spiritual solitude.

5. When the father and mother of S. Katharine of Siena had taken from her all opportunicie of place, and leisure to pray and meditate, our Lord inspired her to make a little interiour Oratorie within her heart, into which retiring her self mentally, she might amidst exteriour affaires attend to this holy mental solitude: And when the world assaulted her, then received she no inconvenience, because (as she said) she had shut up her thoughts in her interiour closet, where she comforted her self with her heavenly spouse. From experience of this exercise, she afterwards counselled her spiritual children to make them an Oratorie within their heart, and there to remain.

5. Withdraw then thy spirit often into thy heart; where, sequestred from all men, thou maicst heart to heart treat the businesse of thy soul with God, and say with David; *I have been like the Pelican in the wildernesse, like the night-raven, or screech-owle within the house. I have watched, and been like the solitary sparrow upon the roof of the house.* Which words (besides their literal sense, which telleth us that this great King took some houres to spend in the solitary contemplation of spiritual things) do moreover shew us in  
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their myſtical ſenſe three excellent retreats, and, as it were, three hermitages wherein we may exerciſe our ſolitarineſſe; in imitation of our Lord and Saviour, who upon mount Calvarie was like a Pelican in the deſert, that quickeneth her dead chickens with her own blood; in his nativity in the forſaken ſtable, he was as the owle in the deſert, weeping and bewailing our ſins and offences; and at the day of his Aſcenſion, he was like to the ſparrow, retiring himſelf, and flying up to heaven, which is, as it were, the roof of the world. And in all theſe three places we may make our ſpiritual retreat, even amidſt the turmoiles of our exterior employments.

6. Holy Elzear, Count of Arian in Provence, having been long abſent from his devout and chaſte Delphina, ſhe ſent expreſſly a meſſenger unto him, to inform her ſelf of his health; and he made her this answer: I am very well, my dear wife; but if thou deſireſt to ſee me, ſeek me in the wound of my bleſſed Saviours ſide, for there I dwell, and there thou ſhalt find me, otherwiſe thou wilt ſearch for me in vain. This was a right Chriſtian Cavalier indeed.

## CHAP. XIII.

*Of aspirations, ejaculatory prayers, and good thoughts.*

1. **WE** retire our selves into God, because we aspire to him ; and we aspire to him, to retire us into him : so that the aspiring to God, and the spirituall retreat, do mutually entertain one another, and both of them proceed and issue from holy thoughts.

2. Aspire then often to God, my Philothea, by brief, yet ardent ejaculations of thy heart, admire his beautie, invoke his assistance, cast thy self in spirit at the foot of the Crosse, adore his goodnesse, inquire of him often concerning thy salvation, give thy soul to him a thousand times a day, fix thy inward eyes upon his inestimable sweetnesse, stretch forth thy hand to him as a child to his father, that he may conduct thee, place him in thy bosome, like a sweet-smelling posie, plant him in thy soul, like a standard, finally, make a thousand sorts of severall motions in thy heart, to inkindle the love of God within thee, and to excite thee to a passionate and tender affection. Thus are ejaculatory prayers made, which that great S. Augustine so carefully counselled the devout Ladie Proba to use. O Philothea, our spirit once  
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giving it self to the company, and familiarie of God, will be all perfumed with his perfections.

3. This exercise is not uneasy, for it may be interlaced with all our businesses, without any hinderance of them at all; for whether we retire our selves spiritually, or use onely these interiour ejaculations, we do no other thing but make certain short digressions which cannot hinder, but rather advance our employments. The Pilgrim, that taketh a little wine to comfort his heart, and refresh his mouth, although he make some little stay, breaketh not off his journey for that, but gaineth more force to finish it more speedily, resting onely to travell afterwards the better.

4. Many Authours have gathered together store of vocall aspirations, which doubtlesse are very profitable; but in my judgement it is better not to oblige thy self to any sort of words, but onely to pronounce either by heart, or mouth those words that fervent love upon the occasion shall suggest to thee; for it will furnish thee with as many as thou canst desire. True it is, that there are certain words which have a particular force to content the heart in such occasions: such are the ejaculations sowed so thick in the psalmes of David;

David; the many invocations of the name of Jesus; the lovely allurements expressed in the Canticles; and spirituall songs also do serve for this end, when they are sung with attention.

5. To conclude, as they that are enamoured with humane and naturall love, have almost alwayes their thoughts fixed upon the person beloved, their heart full of affection towards her, their mouth filled with her praises, and when their beloved is absent they lose no occasion to testifie their passions by letters, not meeting with a tree wherein they engrave not the name of their beloved: even so such as love God can never cease to think upon him, they breath onely for him, they aspire onely to him, and speak onely of him, and, if it were possible, they would grave the sacred name of our Lord Jesus upon the breasts of all men in the world.

6. And all creatures do invite them to this, and each one in its kind declareth to them the praises of their beloved; and as S. Augustine saith, (taking it from S. Antony) all things in this world speak to us with a kind of dumb language, yet intelligible enough, in praise of their love, all things provoke us to good thoughts, from whence afterwards do arise many motions, and aspirations of our soul to



God. Behold some examples of this truth.

7. S. Gregory Bishop of Nazianzen (as he himself relateth to his people) walking upon the sea shore, and considering how the waves, floting upon the sand, left behind them many little shels, stalks of herbs, little oysters, and such like stuff which the sea cast up, and spit, as it were, upon the shore, and then returning with other waves swept them away, and swallowed them up again, while in the mean time the rocks round about continued firm and immoveable, though the billows never so rudely beat upon them; made this good conceit, that feeble men, like shells, and stalks of rushes, suffer themselves to be tossed up and down, and carried away, sometimes to affliction, sometimes to consolation, living alwayes at the mercy of the unconstant waves of fortune; but that great courages continued firm, and unmoved against all kind of tempests; and then out of this meditation he derived those aspirations, and affections of holy David: *Save me, O Lord, for the waters have pearced even to my very soul. O Lord deliver me from the depth of these waters. I am plunged in the depth of the sea, and the tempest hath over-whelmed me:* For at that time he was in affliction for  
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the wicked usurpation of his Bishoprick by Maximus.

8. S. Fulgentius Bishop of Ruspa, being present at a generall assemblie of the nobility of Rome, to whom Theodorick King of the Gothes made an oration, and beholding the splendour of so many great persons gathered together, and ranked each one according to his qualitie; O God, (said he) how beautifull is the heavenly Jerusalem, since that earthly Rome here below is so glorious in her pomp and Majesty? if in this world the lovers of vanity be permitted to shine in such prosperitie, what felicitie is reserved in the other world for the lovers of truth and virtue?

9. S. Anselme Archb. of Canterburie (whose birth hath highly honoured our mountains) was admirable in this practise of good thoughts. A hare pressed by hounds, as this holy Prelat went on a journey, ranne under his horse feet, as to the best place of refuge that the imminent danger of death suggested; and the hounds barking, and baying round about, durst not presume to violate the sanctuary to which their prey had taken recourse. A sight truely very extraordinary; whereat when all the train laughed, great S. Anselme answered weeping, and sighing; Ah! (said he) you laugh, but the poor  
F 3                      beast

beast laugheth not : the enemies of the soul ( assaulted and ill treated on all sides by multitudes of temptations, and sins, ) lay wait for her at the narrow passage of death to catch and devour her, and she seeketh succour and refuge on every side, which if she find not then do her enemies laugh and mock at her. Which when the good Bishop had said; he went sighing forward on his way.

10. Constantine the great writ with great respect to S. Antony; whereat the Religious about him greatly admiring; How, said he, admire you that a King should write to a man ? admire rather that the eternall God hath writ his law to mortal men; nay more, hath spoken to them by word of mouth in the person of his sonne.

11. S. Francis seeing a sheep all alone amidst a heard of goats, observe ( said he to his companion ) the little poor sheep, how mild it is among the kids ; our blessed Lord walked as meekly and humbly among the Pharisees. At another time, seeing a little lamb devoured by a hog ; Ah, little lamb, ( said he weeping ) how lively dost thou represent my Saviours death ?

12. That great person of our age, Francis Borgia, while he was yet Duke of Gandia, going a hawking, made to himself a thousand

thousand devout conceptions. I admired (said he) how the Faulcons come to hand, suffer themselves to be hooded, and to be tied to the perch; and that men are so rebellious to the voice of God.

13. S. Basil the great saith, that the rose among the thorns maketh this exhortation to men: *Whatsoever is most pleasant in this world, O mortall men, is mingled with sorrow: Nothing is pure; sorrows are alwayes joyned with mirth, widdowhood with marriage, cares with fruitfuinesse, ignominie with glory, expence with honours, loathing with delicacies, and sickness with health. The rose is a fair flower, (said this man) but yet fillth me with great sadnesse, putting me in mind of my sinne, for which the earth hath been condemned to bring forth thorns.*

14. A devout soul, beholding the skie and the starres in a fair moonshine night represented in a clear fountain, O my God, (said she) these self same starres shall one day be underneath my feet, when thou shalt vouchsafe to lodge me in thy holy tabernacle: and as the starres of heaven are represented in this fountain upon earth, even so men of this earth are lively represented in heaven, in the living well of the divine charitie. An other seeing a river swiftly flowing, cried out in this

manner; my soul shall never take rest untill she be swallowed up in the sea of the deitie, her originall source. S. Francisca, considering a pleasant brook upon the bank whereof she kneeled to pray, was rapt into an extasie, repeating oft times these words; *Sweetly, and pleasantly floweth the grace of my God, as doth this little river.* Another looking upon the trees adorned with blossoms, sighed, and sayed; wherefore am I alone without blossom in the orchard of the Church? Another seeing little chickens gathered together under their mothers wings; O Lord, (said he) preserve us under the wings of thy providence. Another looking upon the flower called Heliotropium, which turns with the sun; when shall the time be (said he) O my God, that my soul shall wholly follow the allurements of thy goodnesse? and seeing the flowers called Pansies, fair to the eye, but having no sweetnesse; Ah! (said he) such are my thoughts, fair in shew, but fruitlesse in effect.

II. See, Philothea, how a man may draw good thoughts and holy inspirations from whatsoever is presented in the varietie of this mortall life. Unhappy are they who pervert the creatures from their creature, to apply them to sinne, and happy are they that turn them to his glory, and employ

employ their vanitie to the honour of truth: for (as saith S. Gregory Nazianzen) *I am wont to apply all things to my spirituall profit.* Read the devout Epitaph which Saint Hierome made of Paula; for it is pleasant to see how it is all sprinkled with sacred aspirations, and devout conceits, which she was wont to draw from all occurrences whatsoever.

16. Well then, in this exercise of spirituall retreat, and ejaculatorie prayers consisteth the great work of devotion; and it alone may supply the want of all other prayers: but the want of it cannot almost be repaired by any other exercise. Without it we cannot well lead a contemplative life, and but ill an active: without it repose is but idlenesse, and labour confusion. Wherefore I conjure thee to embrace it with thy whole heart, without ever giving it over.

#### CHAP. XIV.

*Of the most holy Masse, and how we ought to hear it.*

1. **H**itherto I have not spoken any thing of the Sun of spirituall exercises, I mean the most holy, sacred, and soveraign Sacrifice of the Masse, the center of

Christian religion, the heart of devotion, and soul of pietie, an unspeakable myſterie which comprehendeth in it the bottomleſſe depth of Gods charitie, and by which God uniting himſelf really to us, liberally communicates his graces and favours.

2. Prayer made in union of this divine ſacrifice hath an unspeakable force: ſo that the ſoul by it aboundeth with heavenly favours as leaning upon her welbeloved, who filleth her ſo full of odours, and ſpiritually ſweetneſſe, that ſhe reſembleth a pillar of ſmoak proceeding from aromaticall wood, mirrhe, incenſe, and all the pouders of ſweeteſt perfumes, as it is ſaid in the Canticles.

3. Uſe then all diligence to aſſiſt everie day at the holy Maſſe, that thou maiſt jointly with the Prieſt offer up the ſacrifice of thy Redeemer unto God his Father for thy ſelf, and for all the Church. The Angels of heaven (as S. John Chryſoſtome ſaith) are alwayes preſent in great number, to honour this myſterie; and we being preſent with the ſame intention, cannot but receive manie favourable influences by ſuch a ſocietie. The quiers of the triumphant, and militant Church unite themſelves to our Lord in this divine action, that with him, in him, and by him, they may raviſh the heart of God the Father,  
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and make us owners of his mercie. O what felicitie enjoyeth that soul, which doth contribute her devout affections for so pretious and desired a good!

4. If upon some urgent necessitie thou be forced to be absent from the celebrating of this soveraign Sacrifice, at the least send thy heart thither to assist there with a spirituall presence. At some time then of the morning go in spirit (if otherwise thou canst not) to the Church, and there unite thy intention with that of all faithfull Christians; and use the same interiour actions in the place where thou art, which thou wouldest use if thou wert really present at the office of the holy Masse.

5. Now to hear either really, or mentally the holy Masse as we ought, first, from the beginning, untill the Priest be before the Altar, prepare thy self with him; which preparation consisteth in placing thy self in the presence of God, in acknowledging thine unworthinesse, and craving pardon for thy offences.

6. From the time that the Priest goeth to the Altar, untill the Gospel, consider the coming of our Saviour into this world, and his life amongst us, by a simple and generall apprehension thereof.

7. From the Gospel to the end of the Creed, consider the preaching of our Lord,



Lord, and protest that thou wilt live and die in the faith, and obedience of his holy word, and in the union of his Catholick Church.

8. From the *Creed* to the *Pater noster*, apply thy heart to the mysteries of the death and passion of our Redeemer, which are actually and essentially represented in this holy Sacrifice, which with the Priest, and the rest of the people thou shalt offer to God the Father, for his honour, and thine own salvation.

9. From the *Pater noster* to the Communion, endeavour to produce a thousand fervent desires from thy heart, wishing ardently to be for ever joyned, and united to thy Saviour by everlasting love.

10. From the Communion till the end, give thanks to his divine Majestie for his Incarnation, life, death, and passion, and for the love which he witnesseth to us in this holy Sacrifice: beseeching him by it to be for ever mercifull to thee, to thy parents, and friends, and to the whole Church; and humbling thy self from the bottom of thy heart, receive with devotion the heavenly blessing which our Lord giveth to thee by the means of his officer.

11. But if thou wilt during the Masse make thy meditation upon the mysteries which thou takest in daily order, it will

not

not then be needfull that thou divert thy self to make these particular actions ; but it will suffice, that at the beginning thou direct thy intention to adore and offer up this holy Sacrifice, by the exercise of thy meditation, and prayer : for in all meditations are found the aforesaid actions either expressely , or tacitely and virtually.

### CHAP. XV.

*Of other publick and common Exercises.*



1. BESIDES all this, Philothea, on holy dayes and Sundayes thou must be present at the Office of the Houres, and Evensong, so far as thy condition will permit. For these dayes are dedicated to God, and therefore in them thou must perform more acts to his honour and worship, then upon other dayes. By this means thou shalt find a great sweetnesse of devotion, as Saint Augustin did, who testifieth in his Confessions, that hearing the divine Office in the beginning of his conversion, his heart did melt in sweetnesse, and his eyes into tears of pietie. And to speake once for all, there is ever more comfort in the publicke Office of the Church, then in our other particular actions ; God having so ordained, that publick prayers be  
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preferred before all kind of particularitie.

2. Enter willingly into the confraternities of that place where thou dwellest; principally into those whose exercises be of most fruit and edification, so thou shalt exercise a kind of obedience verie acceptable to God. For though these confraternities be not commanded, yet are they recommended by the Church, who (to witnesse how much she desireth that many should enroll themselves in them) giveth indulgences, and priviledges to all such as enter into them. And besides it is a deed of excellent charitie to concur, and cooperate with others in their good designs. And although it may happen that one doth as good exercises alone, as in the confraternitie, and perchance taketh more contentment by performing them in particular; yet is God more glorified by the union, and concurrence which we make of good works with our brethren and neighbours.

3. The like do I say of all sorts of publicke prayers, and devotions, which, as much as is possible, we should countenance with our example for the edification of our neighbour, and with our affection for the glory of God, and the common intention of the Church.

## C H A P. XVI.

*Of honour and invocation of Saints.*

1. Since God doth oftentimes send to us inspirations by his Angels, we ought also frequently to send back to him our aspirations by the self same means. The holy souls of the dead, which are in Paradise with the Angels, and are ( as our Saviour saith ) equall, and like to them, have likewise the same office of inspiring us, and of aspiring for us by their sacred intercessions.

2. My Philothea, let us joyn our hearts to these heavenly spirits and happy soules: as the young nightingales learn to sing in company of the old ; so by the holy association which we make with the Saints, we shall be better able to pray, and sing Gods divine praises : *I will sing to thee O Lord, (saith David ) in the sight of thy Angels.*

3. Honour, reverence, and respect the sacred and glorious Virgin Mary with an especiall love : she is the Mother of our sovereign Father, and consequently our Grand-mother. Let us run then to her, and like her little children, cast our selves into her bosome with assured confidence at all times, and in all occurrences. Let us call upon this sweet mother, let us invoke her motherly love; and endeavouring  
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to imitate her vertues, let us bear a true filiall affection towards her.

4. Make thy self very familiar with the Angels, behold them often in spirit, as if they were present with thee : above all, love and reverence the Angell of the Diocese where thou dwellest, and those persons with whom thou livest, but especially thine own ; pray to them often , praise them ordinarily, implore their assistance and succour in all thine affaires, spirituall, or temporall, that they may cooperate with thy intentions.

5. That great person, Peter Faber, the first Priest, first Preacher, first Divinitie-reader of the holy companie of the Name of Jesus, and first companion of B. Ignatius the founder of that Order, coming on a day out of Germanie, where he had done great service to the glorie of our Lord, and passing through the diocese and place of his navitie, related, that having passed many hereticall places, he had received thousands of consolations by saluting, at the entrie of every Parish, the Angells protectours of the same ; and that he sensibly perceived them to have beene favourable to him , both by preserving him from the ambushes of the hereticks, as also in mollifying many soules, and making  
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them tractable to receive from him the doctrine of salvation. And this he said with such asseveration, that a gentlewoman, then very young, hearing it from his own mouth, told it but four years ago (to wit above threescore years after he had spake it) with an extraordinary resentment. I was intreated this last year to consecrate an Altar in the place where God appointed this blessed man to be born, in a little village called Villaret, among our most craggie mountains.

6. Chuse some particular Saints, whose lives thou maist best fancy, and imitate, and in whose intercessions thou mayest place an especial confidence. The Saint whose name thou bearest, is already assigned thee, even from thy Baptisme.

## CHAP. XVII.

*How we ought to hear, and read Gods holy word.*

1. BE devout to the word of God, whether thou hearest it in familiar discourses with thy spiritual friends, or at a Sermon: hear it alwaies with attention, and reverence, and make thy profit of it: suffer it not to fall upon the ground, but receive it into thy heart as a sovereign balm, imitating the blessed Virgin, who kept carefully in her heart all the words which she heard spoken

ken in praise of her son. Remember that our Lord esteemeth of the words which we speak to him in our prayers, according as we esteem of those which he speaketh to us in holy Sermons.

2. Have still about thee some good book of devotion; as of *S. Bonaventure*, of *Gerson*, of *Denis the Carthusian*, of *Lewis Blofius*, of *Granada*, *De Pom*, *Stella*, *Arias*, *Pinelli*, *Avila*, the *Spiritual Conflict*, *S. Augustin his Confessions*, *S. Hieroms epistles*, and such like. Read every day a little in some one of them, with great devotion, as if it were a letter missive which some Saint in heaven had sent to thee to shew thee the way thither, and to encourage thee in thy journey.

3. Read also the lives of the Saints, in which as in a mirrour thou mayst see the pourtraiture of a Christian life; and accommodate all their actions to thy profit, according to thy vocation. For although very many actions of the Saints be not absolutely imitable by such as live in the world, yet all of them may be in some degree followed, either near, or far off. The solitarinesse of *S. Paul the first hermite* is imitated in thy spirituall and real retreats, of which we will speak, and have already spoken before; and the extreme

treme poverty of S. Francis may be imitated by those practises or exercises of spiritual poverty, which we will hereafter set down.

4. True it is, that there be some histories which more directly serve to guide and order our lives, then others do; as the life of the B. Mother Teresa, which is most admirable for all, the lives of the first Jesuits, of the holy Cardinal Borromeus, S. Lewis, S. Bernard, the Chronicles of S. Francis, and such like. Others there are which contain more matter of admiration; as the life of S. Mary of Egypt, of S. Simeon Stelites, of the two SS. Catharines of Siena, and of Genua, of S. Angela, and such like: which nevertheless do administer to us a great general feeling of the sweetnesse of the love of God.

### CHAP. XVIII.

*How we ought to receive inspirations.*

1. **WE** call inspirations, all those allurements, motions, reproaches, remorse, lights, and knowledges which God worketh in us, preventing our heart with his blessings through his fatherly care and love of us, to the end he might awake us, stirre us up, and draw us to virtue, to heavenly



heavenly love, to good resolutions, and in a word to all those things which lead us to our everlasting good. This is it which the spouse calleth knocking at the gate, and speaking to the heart of his spouse, to awake her when she sleepeth, to cry and call after her when she is absent, to invite her to his honey, and to gather apples, and flowers in his garden, to sing, and cause to sound her sweet voice in his eares.

2. I want a comparison to declare my meaning. Three things are required to the full resolution of a marriage, on her behalf who is to be married. First, the husband is propounded to her; secondly, she entertaines the proposition; thirdly, she gives her consent: So likewise God intending to work in us, by us, and with us some act of charity, first, he proposeth it to us by inspirations, secondly, we accept of it, and thirdly, we give our full consent to it. For as to descend to sinne there are three degrees, temptation, delectation, and consent; so there are other three to ascend to virtue; inspiration, which is opposite to temptation, the delectation conceived in the inspiration, contrary to that of the temptation, and consent to the inspiration, contrary to that given to the temptation.

3. For

3. For though the inspiration should endure all our life long, yet should we not be acceptable to God, if we took no delight in it : nay contrariwise, his divine Majestie would be offended with us, as he was with the Israelites, with whom he had been fourty years (as he saith himself) soliciting their conversion, in all which time they would not give ear to him ; whereupon he sware against them in his wrath, that they should never enter into his rest. So likewise the Gentleman that had a long time served his Mistresse, would be much disoblged, if after all this she should in no case hearken to the marriage which he desired.

4. The pleasure which we take in inspirations is a great step to the glory of God, and by it we begin already to adore his Divine Majestie : for although his delight be not as yet a full consent, yet is it a certain disposition thereto ; and if it be accounted a good sign to take pleasure in hearing the Word of God preached, which is as it were an exterior inspiration, it is also no doubt acceptable in the sight of God to take contentment in his internal inspiration. Such was that pleasure whereof the holy Spouse speaks, when she saith ; *My soul was melted with pleasure so soon as my beloved spake.* So the gentle-

gentleman is highly content with his mistress whom he serveth, and taketh it for a great favour when he seeth that she takes delight in his service.

5. But to conclude, it is the consent which perfects the virtuous act; for if after the inspiration received of God, and delight taken in the inspiration, we refuse notwithstanding to give our consent to God, we are extremely ungrateful, and highly offend his Divine Majestie, for in that case the contempt appeareth the greater. So it happened to the spouse; for though the sweet voice of her beloved had touched her heart with holy delight, yet she would not open him the door, but excused her self with a frivolous reason, whereat her lover justly displeased went his way, and left her alone. So the gentleman after long suit to his Mistress, and service accepted, if at last he should be shaken off, and despised, would have much more occasion of discontent, then if his service had never been accepted.

6. Resolve then, Philothea, to accept with all thy heart the inspirations which it shall please God to send thee, and when they arrive admit them as embassadors from the King of heaven, who desireth to make a contract of marriage with thee, hear quietly their embassy, ponder well the

the love of him that vouchsafeth to inspire thee, and cherish the inspiration: Consent to the motion, but with a perfect, constant, and resolute consent; for so God whom thou canst not oblige, will notwithstanding hold himself greatly obliged to thee for thy affection. But before thou give consent to inspirations in important and extraordinary matters, lest thou be deceived, ask counsel of thy director, to the end that he may examine whether the inspiration be true, or false; because the enemy perceiving a soul prompt to consent to inspirations, proposeth oftentimes false ones to deceive her, which he can never do, so long as she with humility obeyeth her conductor.

7. The consent being given, thou must procure with great care the effects, and hasten to put the inspiration in practise, which is the height of true vertue; for to have consented in heart, and not to proceed to the effect thereof, would be as to plant a vine, and not desire that it should fructifie.

8. Now to all this the morning exercise, and spiritual retreat which I have prescribed do serve exceedingly; for by those means we prepare our selves to do well, not onely by a general, but also by a particular preparation.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Of holy Confession.*

1. **O**ur Saviour hath left in his Church the holy Sacrament of Confession or Pennance, that in it we may wash our selves from all our sins, whensoever we are defiled with them. Suffer not then thy heart, Philothea, to be any long time infected with sin, since thou hast so present and easie a remedy.

2. The lionesse having coupled with the leopard, goeth presently to wash away the sent which that copulation hath left her, lest the lion coming, should be offended and enraged against her. The soul which hath consented to sinne, ought to have a horreur of her self, and to purge her self as soon as may be, for the respect which she ought to bear to the eyes of the divine Majesty who beholds her. And why should we dye this spiritual death, having so soveraign a remedy?

3. Confesse thy self humbly, and devoutly once every week, and ever before thou communicatest, if it be possible, although thou feel not thy conscience charged with guilt of any mortal sin: for by confession thou shalt not only receive absolution of thy venial sins, which thou shalt confesse, but also great force to avoid  
them

them hereafter, with a clear light to discern them, and abundance of grace to repair all the damage which thou hast incurred by them. Thou wilt practise the virtues of humilitie, obedience, simplicitie, and charitie: and in this one act of Confession, thou shalt exercise more virtues then in any other whatsoever.

4. Have alwayes a true detestation of the sins which thou shalt confesse, be they never so little; with firm resolution to amend them hereafter. Many confesse their veniall sinnes of custome, and rather with respect to order, then amendment, and therefore they continue al their life charged with the burden of them, and lose by that means many spirituall helps and advantages. If then thou confesse to have lied, though without prejudice to any, or to have spoken some inordinate, or idle word, or to have played overmuch; repent thy self thereof, and purpose firmly to amend. For it is an abuse to confesse any kind of sinne, be it mortall or veniall, without a will to amend, since Confession was instituted for no other end.

5. Make not those superfluous accusations which many do of custome. I have not loved God so well as I ought: I have not prayed with so great devotion as I should: I have not cherished my neighbour

as I ought to have done : I have not received the Sacraments with so great reverence as I ought ; and such like. For making such accusations, thou bringest nothing in particular that may makethy Confessiour understand the state of thy conscience ; for al the men upon earth may say the same, if they should come to Confession.

6. Consider therefore what particular cause thou hast to make those accusations, and when thou hast discovered it, accuse thy self of this default simply and plainly. For example, thou accusest thy self not to have cherished thy neighbour as thou oughtest ; peradventure because having seen some poor body in great necessity, whom thou mightest easily have succoured and comforted, thou hadst no care of him. Well then, in this case accuse thy self thus in particular : having seen a poor man in necessity, I did not assist him as I could have done, through my meer negligence, hard-heartednesse, or contempt, according as thou knowest the occasion of that default. So likewise accuse not thy self that thou hast not prayed unto God with such devotion as thou oughtest, but if thou hast admitted any voluntary distraction, or neglected to take convenient place, due time, and posture requisite for attention in prayer, accuse thy self with all simplicity,

citie of that default, according as thou shalt find thy self faultie, without using those generall termes which make not to the purpose for thy confession.

7. Think it not enough to confesse thy veniall sinnes, as concerning the fact onely, but accuse thy self also of the motive which induced thee to commit them. For example; be not content to say that thou hast lied without endamaging any person, but declare whether it were for vain glorie, either to praise, or excuse thy self, or for vain mirth, or for stubbornnesse. If thou hast sinned in gaming, expresse whether it were for greedinesse of lucre, or for company sake; and so of the rest. Tell also how long thou hast persevered in thy sinne; for continuance of time ordinarily much increases the sinne, there being great difference betwixt a light vanitie which slippeth into our mind for some quarter of an hour, and one whereon our heart hath dwelt a day, or two, or three. We must then confesse the fact, the motive, and the continuance of our sins. For though ordinarily we are not bound to be so punctuall in explicating veniall sinnes, nay not absolutely to confesse them at all; yet they that desire to cleanse their souls, the better to attain to true devotion, must be carefull to manifest to their spirituall physician their



disease whereof they desire to be cured, be it never so small.

8. Spare not to tell what is requisite to declare plainly the qualitie of thine offence, as the occasion which thou hast had to be angrie, or to support one in his vice. For example; a man whom I like not speaketh to me some word in jest, and I take it ill, and grow cholerick thereupon, whereas if another man, that had been more pleasing to me, had spoken more harshly, I should have taken it in good part: in such a case, I will not omit to say, I have used cholerick speeches against a certain person, taking in ill part some words which he spake to me, not so much for the qualitie of the words, as for my dislike of the party. And if it be moreover needfull to expresse the terms, to declare thy self the better, I think it were good to declare them: for accusing thy self so plainly, thou dost not onely discover the fault committed, but withall the evil inclinations, habits, and other roots of sin; so that by this means thy ghostly father cometh to have a more perfect knowledge of the conscience wherewith he dealeth, and of the remedies most convenient for the same. Yet must thou alwayes conceal the third persons, who have been partakers with thee in the offence, as much as is possible.

9. Take heed of many sins, which often dwell

dwell and reign secretly in our consciences, that thou maist confesse and purge thy self of them ; and to this purpose read attentively the 27. 28. 29. 35. and 36 chapters of the third part, and the 8. chapter of the fourth part.

10. Change not easily thy Confessour; but having made choice of a sufficient one, continue to render him account of thy conscience on the dayes, and times appointed, opening to him freely and plainly the sins thou hast committed from time to time, and monthly, or from two months to two months, tell him likewise the state of thy inclinations, though thou have not sinned by them, as whether thou be tormented with sadnesse, or with melancholy, whether thou be given to mirth, or desirous of gain, or such like inclinations.

## CHAP. XX.

### *Of frequenting the holy Communion.*

1. **I**T is said, that Mithridates King of Pontus, having invented the Mithridate, so strengthened his body by it, that endeavouring to poyson himself to avoid the servitude of the Romans, he could not possibly do it. Our Saviour hath instituted the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, which containeth really his flesh and bloud, to the end that he who eateth it should live eternally.

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nally. Whosoever then shal use it often with devotior, so confirmeth his health, and the life of his soul, that it is almost impossible he should be impoisoned with any kind of evil affection. We cannot be nourished with this flesh of life, and yet live in affections of death. So that as men dwelling in the terrestriall paradise, might have avoided corporall death by virtue of the tree of life which God had planted there; so may they also avoid spirituall death, through the efficacy of this Sacrament of life.

2. If the tendrest fruits, and most subject to corruption (as cherries, strawberries, and apricocks) be preserved easily all the year long with sugar or honey; it is no wonder that our hearts, though never so frail and feeble, be preserved from the corruption of sinne. when they are sugred and sweetned with the incorruptible flesh and bloud of the son of God. O I hilothea, the Christians which shall be damned will be without reply, when the just judge shall make them see the wrong they did themselves to incurre spirituall death, since it was so easie to have maintained themselves in life and health, by the eating of his body which he had left to them for that end. Miserable wretches! (will he say) why would you die, having the fruit and food of life at your command?

3. *To receive the Communion of the Eucharist every day, neither do I commend, nor discommend: but to communicate every Sunday, I persuade and exhort every one, if his soul be without affection to sinne.* These be the very words of S. Augustine: with whom I neither blame, nor commend absolutely those that communicate every day, but leave that to the discretion of the ghostly father of him that would be resolved in this point: for the disposition requisite for such frequent communion requiring much perfection, it is not good to counsell it generally; and because this perfect disposition may be found in many souls, it is not good to divert or dissuade generally all men from it; but rather to leave it to be regulated according to the inward state of every one in particular. It were indiscretion to counsell every one without distinction to this frequent communion; but it were more indiscretion to blame any one for it, especially if he follow the advise of any worthy directour. The answer of S. Katharine of Siena was ingenious, when it was objected against her often communicating, that S. Augustine did neither approve nor disapprove communicating every day; well, (said she) since S. Augustine blamed it not, I pray do not you blame it, and I am content.

4. But S. Augustine, as thou seest, Philothea, exhorteth and counselleth earnestly to communicate every sunday: follow his counsell then, as near as is possible; for since (as I suppose) thou hast no kind of affection to mortall sinne, nor deliberately to veniall, thou art in the true disposition which S. Augustine requireth; yea, and in a more excellent, because thou hast not onely no affection to commit sinne, but further, thou art without affection to the sinne it self; so that if thy ghostly father find it fit, thou maist profitably communicate more frequently then every sunday.

5. Yet many lawfull impediments may befall thee, not on thine own part, but on theirs with whom thou livest, which may give occasion to a discreet conductour to forbid thee to communicate so often. As for example; if thou live in any kind of subjection, and those to whom thou owest obedience be so ill instructed, or so humorous that they be troubled, or disquieted to see thee communicate so often; peradventure, all things well considered, it would be good to condescend to these mens infirmity, and to communicate but once every fifteen dayes: but this is to be understood, when thou canst by no means overcome this difficulty. It is hard to give a generall  
rule

rule in this case : we must do what our ghostly father will advise ; though I may boldly say, that the greatest distance between the times of communicating, amongst such as desire to serve God devoutly, is from month to month.

6. A discreet person will be hindred neither by father, nor mother, husband, nor wife, from often communicating : for since upon the day of thy communion thou dost not neglect to do that which is requisite to thy calling, but wilt be rather more mild, and observant towards them, nor wilt refuse them any kind of dutie ; there is no likelihood that they should seek to divert thee from this exercise, which will bring them no inconvenience, except they be of a very froward, and unreasonable spirit ; for in that case ( as I have said ) peradventure thy directour will order thee to comply with them.

7. I must say one word for married people : In the ancient law, God saw it not good that creditours should exact their debts upon festivall dayes, but he never thought it unfit that debtours should pay and restore their debts to such as exacted them. It is an indecency, though no great sin, to sollicite paiment of the marriage dutie, the day that one hath communicated,



but it is no indecencie, but rather meritorious to pay it. Wherefore, for paying this debt none ought to be debarred from the Communion, if otherwise their devotion provoke them to desire it. It is certain that in the primitive Church all Christians did communicate every day, although they were married, and blessed with generation of children: and for this cause I said, that often communicating bringeth no manner of inconvenience to father or mother, husband or wife, so that the partie communicating be prudent and discreet. As for bodily diseases, there are none which can be a lawfull impediment to this holy devotion, save onely that which provoketh frequent vomiting.

8. To communicate every eight dayes, it is requisite neither to be guiltie of mortall sinne, nor of any affection to veniall sinne, and to have a fervent desire of coming to this heavenly banquet; but to communicate every day, it is moreover necessary to have conquered the greatest part of our evill inclinations, or that it be by advice of our spirituall Father.

## CHAP. XXI.

*How we ought to communicate.*

I. **B**EGIN to prepare thy self to the Communion the evening before, by many aspirations and ejaculations of love, retiring thy self somewhat sooner, that thou mayest rise more early in the morning. If thou chance to awake in the night, fill presently thy heart and thy mouth with some odoriferous words, by means of which thy soul may be perfumed to receive thy spouse, who watching whilest thou sleepest, prepareth himself to bring thee a thousand graces and favours, if on thy part thou dispose thy self to receive them. In the morning get up with great joy, for the happinesse which thou expectest; and being confess'd, goe with great confidence, accompanied also with humilitie, to receive this heavenly food which nourisheth thee to immortall life. After thou hast recited the sacred words, *O Lord I am not worthie, &c.* move not thy head or lips any more, neither to pray, nor to sigh, but opening thy mouth softly, and moderately, and lifting up thy head as much as is needfull, that the Priest may see what he doth, full of hope, faith, and charitie, receive him whom

whom, in whom, by whom, and for whom thou believest, hopest, and lovest.

2. O Philothea, think with thy self, that as the Bee having gathered from the flowers the dew of heaven, and the choicest juice of the earth, and having converted it into honey she carrieth it into her hive: so the Priest, having taken from the Altar the Saviour of the world, the true Son of God, who, as the dew, is descended from heaven, and true Sonne of the Virgin, who, as a flower, is sprung from the earth of our humanitie, he putteth him as delicious meat into thy mouth and body.

3. Having received him, stir up thy heart to come and doe homage to this King of salvation; treat with him of thy inward affairs, contemplate him within thee, where he is lodged for thy happiness. To conclude, make him as welcome as thou canst possibly, and carry thy self in such manner, as that men may judge by all thy actions that God is with thee.

4. When thou canst not have the benefit of communicating really at the holy Masse, communicate at least in heart and spiritually, uniting thy self with an ardent desire to this quickning flesh of our B. Saviour.

5. Thy principall intent in communicating

cating must be to advance, comfort, and strengthen thy self in the love of God. Thou must receive onely for love, that which onely love hath caused to be given thee. Thou canst not consider our Saviour in any action more amorous, or more tender towards us, then in this Sacrament, in which he annihilateth himself in a manner, and turneth himself into meat, that so he may penetrate our souls, and unite himself most intimately to the heart and body of his faithfull servants.

6. If worldlings ask thee why thou communicatest so often, tell them it is to learn to love God, to be purified from thy imperfections, to be delivered from thy miseries, to be comforted in thy afflictions, and to be strengthened in thy weaknesse. Tell them, that two sorts of persons ought to communicate often, the perfect, because being well disposed, they do themselves wrong in not approaching to the spring, and fountain of perfection; and the imperfect, that they might be able justly to pretend to perfection: the strong, lest they become feeble; and the feeble, that they may become strong: the sick, to be healed; and the whole, lest they fall into sicknesse: and that for thy own part, as one imperfect, feeble, and sick, thou hast need to communicate often

often with him who is thy perfection, strength, and health. Tell them, such as have not many worldly affaires should communicate often, because they have leisure; and such as have many temporall busineses should likewise do so, because they have need of it: and that he who laboureth much, and taketh great pains, ought also to eat solid meats, and frequently. Tell them, that thou receivest the blessed Sacrament, to learn to receive it well; because no man performs an action well, which he doth not often practice.

7. Communicate often, Philothea, and as often as thou canst, with the advice of thy ghostly Father. Hares in our mountains become white in winter, because they neither see, nor eat any thing but snow: so by adoring and eating beauty, goodnesse, and puritie it self in this divine Sacrament, thou wilt become intirely fair, good, and pure.

# THE THIRD PART OF THE INTRODUCTION, Containing sundrie advices concerning the exercise of virtues.

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## CHAP. I.

*Of the choice which we ought to make  
in the exercise of virtues.*

1. **T**He King of the Bees never goeth into the fields, but environed with all his little people: and Charitie never entreth into the heart, but she lodgeth with her all the whole train of other virtues, exercising and setting them a work, as a Captain doth his souldiers. But she employeth them not all at once, nor all alike, nor in all seasons, nor in every place: For the just man is like a tree planted upon the water side, which bringeth forth fruit in due season; because Charitie watering the soul, bringeth forth in her the works of virtue, every one in their proper time.

2. *Musick, how ever pleasant in it self, is troublesome in time of mourning, saith the Proverb. It is a great fault in many, who undertaking the exercise of some particular virtue, resolve to produce actions*  
out

out of it in all sorts of occurrences, and like the ancient Philosophers, either alwaies weep, or alwaies laugh; and (which is yet worse) blame and censure such as do not alwaies exercise the same virtues. We should rejoyce with the joyfull, and weep with the sorrowfull, saith the Apostle: Charitie is patient, bountifull, liberrall, discreet, and complying.

3. There are notwithstanding some virtues which are almost universall in practice, and ought not onely to work their own actions apart, but also to communicate their qualities with the actions of all other virtues. Occasions are seldom presented to exercise fortitude, and magnificence; but meeknesse, temperance, modesty, and humilitie, are virtues with which all the actions of our life ought to be tempered. It is true, there are virtues more excellent then these, but the use of these is more necessary. Sugar is more excellent then salt, but salt is more often and generally used. We must alwaies therefore have good, and ready provision of these generall virtues, since the use of them is so ordinarie.

4. Among the exercise of virtues, we ought to prefer that which is most conformable to our calling, not that which is most agreeable to our fancie. S. Paula delighted to exercise the virtue of corporall

mor-

mortifications, that so she might more easily enjoy tranquillity of spirit, but she had more obligation to obey her superiours; and therefore S. Hierom saith, that she was to be reprehended in that she used immoderate abstinences, against her Bishops advise. The Apostles on the other side, appointed to preach the Gospel, and distribute the bread of heaven to foules, judged exceeding well, that they should do wrong to this great function, if they should employ their time in caring for the poor, although to do so were an excellent virtue. Every vocation hath need to practise some special virtue. There is difference between the virtues of a Prelate, and those of a Prince, or a souldier; the virtues of a married woman, are different from the virtues of a widow: and although all ought to be indued with all virtues, yet all are not bound to practise them alike, but each one to give himself in more particular manner to those virtues which are requisite to that kind of life whereto he is called.

5. Among the virtues which concern not our particular duty, we must prefer the most excellent, and not the most apparent. Comets ordinarily seem greater then the starres, and take up much more place in our eyes, whereas indeed they are  
neither



neither in greatnesse, nor quality comparable to the starres, neither seem they great for any other reason, but because they are nearer to us, and in a more grosse subject in respect of the starres: So there are virtues, which because they are near to us, sensible, and (if so I may say) more material, are highly esteemed, and alwayes preferred by the vulgar: so commonly they prefer corporal almes, before the spiritual; the haire-shirt, fasting, nakednesse, disciplines, and other such bodily mortifications, before meeknesse, courtesie, modesty, and other mortifications of the mind, which notwithstanding are much more excellent. Chuse then, Philothea, the best virtues, not the most esteemed; the most excellent, not the most apparent; the chiefest, not the bravest.

6. It is profitable that every one should chuse a particular exercise of vertue, not to abandon the rest, but to keep his mind in a more settled order, and employment. A fair young woman, shining like the Sun, royally adorned, and crowned with a garland of olives, appeared to S. John Bishop of Alexandria, and said unto him; I am the Kings eldest daughter, if thou canst accept of me for thy friend, I will conduct thee to his presence. He perceived

ceived that this was mercy towards the poor which God commended to him; and therefore ever after, he gave himself in such sort to the exercise of works of mercy, as that he is generally called S. John the Almoner. Eulogius of Alexandria, desiring to do some particular service to God, and being not able to embrace a solitary life, or to resign himself up to the obedience of an other; took to him in his house a miserable person, infected with leprosie, that he might exercise his charity and mortification upon him; and to perform this with more perfection, made a vow to entertain him, honour, and serve him as a servant his lord and master: now upon some temptation happening as well to the leper, as to Eulogius, to depart one from the other, they went to great S. Antony, who sayed to them, beware, my children, that you separate not your selves one from the other, for you being both near to your end, if the Angel find you not together, you are in great danger of losing your crownes.

7. The King S. Lewis visited hospitals, and served the sick with his own hands, as if he had served for wages. S. Francis above all things loved poverty, which he termed his mistress. S. Dominick preaching, whereof his order takes the name.

S. Gre-

S. Gregory the great took pleasure in entertaining pilgrims, following the example of great Abraham, and like him received the King of glory in form of a pilgrim. Tobias exercised his charity in burying the dead. S. Elizabeth, as great a Princess as she was, delighted in nothing so much as in abasing her self. S. Katharine of Genua in her widowhood dedicated herself to serve an hospital. Cassianus recounteth, that a devout gentlewoman desirous to exercise the vertue of patience, came to S. Athanasius, who at her request placed a poor widow with her, so wayward, cholerick, troublesome, and intolerable with her insolence and peevishnesse, that she gave the devout Lady sufficient occasion to practise the vertue of meeknesse and patience.

8. So amongst the servants of God, some apply themselves to serve the sick, others to relieve the poor, others to instruct little children in the knowledge of Christian doctrine, others to recall souls that are lost and gone astray, others to adorn Churches, and deck Altars, others to make peace and agreement among men. Wherein they imitate embroiderers, who upon divers grounds, with admirable variety intermingle silk, silver, and gold, whereof they make all sorts of flowers:

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for so these godly soules, who undertake some particular exercise of devotion, do make it serve them as a ground-work of their spirituall embrodery, upon which they work the variety of all other virtues; holding by that means all their actions and affections better united and ordered, by the careful application of them to their principal exercise; and so they set forth their spirit

*Clad in cloth of gold embroder'd,  
with needle-work richly powder'd.*

9. When we are assaulted by any vice, it behoveth us, as much as is possible, to practise the contrary virtue, and to apply all other virtues to the perfecting thereof; for so we shall overcome the enemy, and advance our selves in all other virtues. If I feel my self assaulted by pride, or choler, in all my actions I will bend my self towards humility, and meeknesse; and to that end I will apply all my other exercises, of prayer, of the Sacraments, of prudence, of constancy, and sobriety. For, as the wild boares, to sharpen their tusks, whet and grind them with their other teeth, so that all of them reciprocally become sharp: so a virtuous man, having undertaken to perfect himself in that virtue of which he hath most need for his defence, ought to file and whet it by the exercise

exercise of others, and in refining that one they all become more polished and excellent. So it happened to Job, who exercising himself particularly in patience, against so many temptations wherewith he was violently assaulted, became perfectly holy in all kind of virtues. Yea, it hath happened (as S. Gregory Nazianzen saith) that by one onely act of some virtue well and perfectly performed, a man attaineth to the height of virtue: and he alleageth Rahab, who having exactly practised the office of hospitality, attained to supreme glory. Which is to be understood, when such acts are practised with excellent fervour of charity.

## CHAP. II.

*Pursuance of the former discourse, about the choyse of virtues.*

I. **S**aint Augustine saith excellently, that young beginners in devotion commit certain faults, which according to the rigour of the lawes of perfection are blameable, and yet are very commendable for the presages which they give of a future excellency in piety, to which they serve as a disposition. That base and cowardly fear, which begetteth excessive scruples in the soules of those that newly forsake the custome of sin, is a commendable virtue in

in beginners, and a certain sign of a future purity of conscience: but this fear would be very reprehensible in those who are far advanced, in whose heart perfect love should reign, which by little and little chaseth away this servile fear.

2. **S. Bernard** in his beginning was full of rigour and austerity towards them that put themselves under his conduct, to whom he declared, even at their first entrance, that they must forsake the body, and come to him onely with the spirit. When he heard their confessions, he detested with an extraordinary severity all kind of faults, were they never so small; and so prest these poor novices to perfection, that instead of putting them forward, he drew them backward, for they lost heart and breath, to see themselves so hastily driven up so high and steep an ascent. Observe Philothea, it was the most ardent zeal of a perfect purity which provoked this great Saint to this method; and this zeal was a great virtue, yet it ceased not to be reprehensible; and God himself in a holy apparition corrected him for it, infusing into his soul a meek, sweet, amiable, and tender spirit; by meanes of which he, being wholly changed, accused himself very much of his former severity, and became so mild,  
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and condescending to every one, that he made himself all to all, that he might gain them all.

3. S. Hierome having recounted that S. Paula (his ghostly child) was not only excessive, but obstinate in the exercise of bodily mortifications, even to that height that she refused to hearken to the contrary advise, which S. Epiphanius her Bishop had given her in that respect, and moreover, that she gave herself over in such sort to grief for the death of her friends, that she was alwayes in danger of death; in fine he concluded in this sort: Some man will say, that instead of writing the praises of this Saint, I write reproofs and reproaches; but I call Jesus to witnesse (whom she served, and whom I desire to serve) that I lye not, either on the one side, or on the other, but set down clearly what is to be said of her, as one Christian of another; that is to say, I write a history of her, not a panegyrick, and that her vices are the virtues of others. His meaning is, that the defects of S. Paula would have born the name of virtues in a soul lesse perfect: as in truth there are actions which are esteemed imperfections in such as are perfect, but would be held great perfections in those who are imperfect.

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4. It is a good signe in a sick man, when at the end of his sicknesse his legges swell, for it shews that nature, now strengthened, casteth out her superfluous humours; but the very same sign would be ill in one that were not sick; for it demonstrates that nature hath not force enough to resolve and dissipate the humours. My Philothea, we must have a good opinion of those in whom we see the practice of virtues, although with imperfection, since the Saints themselves have often practised them in such manner. But as for thee, thou must have care to exercise thy self in them, not onely faithfully, but discreetly: and to that end observe carefully the advise of the wise-man, not relying upon our own prudence, but upon the judgement of such whom God hath given us for Conductours.

5. There are certain things by many esteemed virtues, which in truth are none at all; of which it is needfull to speak a word or two: I mean extasies, raptures, insensibilities, or impassibilities, deificall unions, revelations, transformations, and such like perfections of which some books do treat, and promise to elevate the soul even to a contemplation purely intellectuall, to an essential application of the spirit, and to a supereminent life. Observe well,

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Philothea, these perfections are not virtues, but rather rewards and recompences that God giveth indeed for virtue, or rather patterns of the happinesse of the life to come, which sometimes are presented to men, to make them in love with the whole pieces above in Heaven.

6. But we must not for all that pretend to such favours, since they are no way necessary to the well-serving and loving of God, which should be our onely aim; neither are they graces that can alwayes be obtained by travell and industrie, since they are rather passions then actions, which well we may receive, but procure them in us we cannot.

7. I adde, that we have not undertaken more then to make our selves virtuous, devout, and good men, and therefore we must employ our selves earnestly in that; and if it please God to raise us to these angelicall perfections, we shall be then also good Angels: but in the mean time let us exercise our selves simply, humbly, and devoutly in little virtues, the conquest of which our Saviour hath exposed to our care and industry; as patience, meeknesse, mortification of our hearts, humility, obedience, poverty, chastity, compassion towards our neighbours, and bearing with their imperfections, diligence, and holy fervour. Let us

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willingly leav these supereminences for elevated souls; we merit not so high a place in Gods service, we shall be abundantly happy to serve him in his kitchen, in his pantrie, to be lackies, porters, grooms of his chamber; it is his goodnes afterwards if he please to advance us to his cabinet, and privy councill. Yea, Philothea, for this King of glory doth not recompence his servants according to the dignitie of the offices which they bear, but according to the measure of the love and humili y with which they serve him.

8. Saul, seeking his fathers asses, found the crown of Israel. Rebecca by watering Abrahams camels, became the spouse of his sonne. Ruth gleaning after the harvest men of Booz, and lying at his feet, was advanced to his side, and made his wife. Certainly such high pretensions to things so extraordinary are very subject to illusions, deceits, and errours; and it happeneth sometimes that those who think themselves Angels, are scarce good men, and that there is more pomp in their words, then in their thoughts, or actions. Yet must we not lightly despise, or rashly censure any thing; but blessing God for the supereminence of other men, keep our selves humbly in our lower, but safer way, lesse splendid, but more suteable to our in-

sufficiency and weaknesse ; wherein if we converse humbly and faithfully, God will exalt us to great honours.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Of Patience.*

1. *PATIENCE is necessary for you, that performing the will of God you may obtain the promise, saith the Apostle : yea, for as our Saviour himself pronounced, in your patience you shall possesse your souls. It is mans greatest happinesse, Philothea, to possesse his soul ; and the more perfect our patience is, the more perfectly do we possesse our souls. Call to mind often that our Lord hath saved us by suffering and induring, and that we ought also to work our salvation by sufferings, and afflictions ; as by induring injuries, contradictions, and crosses with all possible meeknesse.*

2. Limit not thy patience to such, and such kind of injuries and afflictions, but extend it universally to all those that God shall send, and suffer to befall thee. There be some men that will suffer no tribulations, but such as are honourable, as for example, to be wounded in battell, to be prisoners of warre, to be persecuted for Religion, to be impoverished by some quarrel in which they got the mastery : these men love not tribulation, but the honour of it.

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He that is patient indeed, and a true servant of God, suffereth indifferently the tribulations accompanied with ignominy, and those that are honourable. To be despised, reprehended, and accused by wicked men, is but a pleasure to a man of courage; but to be reproched and ill treated by good men, by our friends, by our parents, there is the true triall of patience. I esteem more the meeknesse wherewith the great S. Charls Borromæus suffered a long time the publick reprehensions, which a great preacher of an order exceeding strict did utter against him in the pulpit, then all the assaults which he received from others: for as the stinging of bees is farre more smarting then that of flies; so the evil that we receive of good men, and the contradictions that they make, are much more insupportable then others; and yet it chanceth very often, that two good men, having both of them good intentions, through the diversity of their opinions, do raise great persecutions and contradictions one against the other.

3. Be patient, not onely in the main and principall afflictions which happen to thee, but also in their accessories and accidents. Many could be content to have afflictions, so they might not be prejudiced by them. I am not grieved (saith one)

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that I am become poor, but that by this means I am disabled to pleasure my friends, to bring up my children, and live honourably, as I desire. I would not care (saith another) were it not that the world will think that this is befallen me by mine own fault. Another would be content the world should speak ill of him, and would suffer it very patiently, so that none would believe the detractour. Others there are that would willingly have some affliction, but not too much: they are not impatient (say they) that they are sick, but that they want money to cure themselves, or that they are so great a trouble to those that are about them. But I say, Philothea, we must have patience, not onely to be sick, but to be sick of that disease which God will, in that place where he will, and amongst such persons as he will, and with those inconveniences which he will; and so of other tribulations.

4. When any evil shall happen to thee, apply such remedies as shall be lawfull and pleasing to God, for to do otherwise, were to tempt his divine Majestie: but having done that, attend with an entire resignation the successe which it shall please God to send; if he permit the remedies to overcome the evil, give him thanks with humility; if it please him that the evil overcome

come the remedies, blesse him with patience.

5. I am of opinion with S. Gregory: When thou shalt be justly accused of any fault which thou hast committed, humble thy self, and confesse that thou deservest more then the accusation which is laid upon thee. But if thou be falsely accused, excuse thy self meekly, denying thy self to be guilty; for thou owest that reverence to truth, and to the edification of thy neighbour. But if after thy true and lawfull excuse men continue to accuse thee, vex not thy self, nor strive to get thy excuse admitted, for having done thy duty to truth, thou must also do it to humility. Thus thou shalt neither prejudice the care that thou oughtest to have of thy fame, nor the love which thou owest to tranquillity, meeknesse of heart, and humility.

6. Complain as little as thou canst of the wrongs done thee; for ordinarily he that complaineth sinneth: because self-love ever makes us believe injuries to be greater then they are. But above all things complain not to such persons as are prone to malice, and to think ill. If it be expedient to make thy complaint to any either to redresse thy injury, or to quiet thy mind, let it be done to the peaceable, & to such as truly love God; for otherwise, instead of

easing thy heart, they will provoke it to greater disquiet, and instead of pulling out the thorn that pricketh thee, they will fasten it deeper into thy foot.

7. Many being sick, afflicted, and injured refrain from complaining, or shewing any tenderneſſe, judging (and that rightly) that it would too evidently teſtifie want of courage and generoſity; but yet they deſire extreamly, and by ſubtilties endeavour to make other men beſeeme them, take compaſſion of them, and eſteem them not onely afflicted, but patient, and couragious. Now this is a patience indeed, but a falſe one, which in effect is nothing elſe but a fine and ſubtil ambition, and vanity. *They have glory,* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *but not before God.* The true patient man neither complaineth of his evils, nor deſireth to be lamented; he ſpeaketh of them clearly, truly, and ſimply without lamentations, complaints, or aggravations: if he be pittied, he patiently ſuffereth himſelf to be pittied, unleſſe they beſeeme him for ſome croſſe which he hath not; for then will he moſtly declare that he hath no ſuch miſfortune, and in this ſort continueth peaceably betwixt truth and patience, confeſſing, not complaining of his afflictions.

8. In the contradictions which befall thee in the exerciſe of devotion (for they will

will not be wanting) remember the words of our Saviour; *A woman when she is in travail hath anguish, because her hour is come: but when she hath brought forth her child, then she remembreth not the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world:* for thou hast conceived in thy soul the noblest child in the world, to wit, Jesus Christ, and untill he be brought forth altogether, thou canst not chuse but suffer excessive paines; but be of good courage, these dolours once past, the everlasting joy shall remain with thee of having brought forth such a child to the world. Now he shall be wholly brought forth by thee, when thou shalt have formed him entirely in thy heart and actions, by the imitation of his life.

9. When thou shalt be sick, offer up all thy griefs, pains, and agonies to the service of our Lord, and beseech him to unite them with the torments which he suffered for thee. Obey thy Physician, take medicines, meats, and other remedies for the love of God, remembring the gall which he took for our sakes; desire to be cured that thou maist serve him; grudge not to languish in sicknesse that thou maist obey him; and dispose thy self to die (if so it please him) that thou maist praise and enjoy him.



10. Consider that the Bees, when they make their honie, do live upon a bitter provision; and that we in like manner can never perform actions of greater meeknesse and patience, nor better compose the honie of true virtues, then while we eat the bread of bitterness, and live amongst afflictions. And as the honie which is gathered from thime (a little bitter herb) is the best of all; so the virtue which is exercised in the bitterness of base, and most abject tribulations is the most excellent of all.

11. Look often with thy interiour eyes upon Christ Jesus crucified, naked, blasphemed, slandered, forsaken, and in a word, overwhelmed with all sorts of sorrows, griefs, and persecutions; and consider that all thy sufferings, neither in qualitie, nor quantitie are in any sort comparable to his, and that thou canst never suffer any thing for him, in comparison of that which he hath endured for thee.

12. Consider the torments which heretofore the Martyrs suffered, and those which many now endure, more grievous without any proportion then thine, and say; Alas, my pains are consolations, and my griefs pleasures in comparison of those which without relief, assistance, or mitigation live in a perpetuall death, overcharged with

with afflictions infinitely heavier then mine.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Of exteriour humilitie.*

1. *Borrow and take many empty vessels,* (said Elizeus to the poor widow) *and pour oyl into them.* To receive the grace of God into our hearts, they must be void of vain-glory. The carrion crying, and looking upon the birds of prey, affrighteth them by a secret property and virtue, therefore the doves love her above all other birds, and live in security with her: so humility repelleth Satan, and conserveth the graces and gifts of the holy Ghost in us, and therefore all the Saints, but especially the King of Saints, and his blessed mother have alwaies more esteemed this virtue then any other amongst the moral. We call that glory *vain*, which we assume to our selves either for that which is not in us, or for that which is in us but is not ours, or for that which is in us and is ours but deserves not that we should glory in it. Nobility of blood, favour of great persons, popular honour, these are things which are not in us, but either in our progenitours, or in the estimation of other men. Some there are that become proud and insolent by being upon  
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a good horse, or for having a feather in their hat, or by wearing good cloathes; but who seeth not this folly? for if there be any glory in this, it belongs to the horse, the bird, and the taylor; and what a want of courage it is to borrow estimation from a horse, from a feather, or some foolish new fashion. Others esteem and value themselves for mustaches turned up, or a well trimmed beard, for their curled locks, and soft hands, or because they can sing, or play: but are not those effeminate men who seek to raise their value, & to increase their reputation by such frivolous, and foolish things? Others for a little knowledge would be honoured and respected in the world, as if every one ought to come to school to them, and account them their masters; and therefore they are called Pedants. Others strut like peacocks in contemplation of their beauty, and think all the world in love with them. All this is extremely vain, foolish, and impertinent; and glory grounded upon such weak foundations is called vain, and frivolous.

2. True goodnesse is known as true balm; for balm is tryed by dropping it into water, if it sink to the bottom it is counted the most excellent and pretious: Even so, to know whether a man be truly wise, learned, generous, and noble, observe

observe whether his gifts tend to humilitie, modestie, and submission, for then they shall be true virtues ; but if they swim above water, and strive to appear, they are so much the lesse true by how much the more they shall be apparent.

3. Pearls that are conceived and nourished by the wind, or by the noise of thunder, have nothing but the shell of pearl, and are void of substance : so the virtues and qualities of men bred and nourished in pride, boasting, and vanity, have nothing but a simple apparence of good, without juice, without marrow, and without soliditie.

4. Honours, degrees, and dignities are like saffron, which prospers best, and groweth most plentifully when it is trodden under feet. It is no honour to be fair, when a man prizes himself for it ; beauty (to have a good grace ) should be neglected ; knowledge dishonours us when it pusses us up, and degenerates into pedantry.

5. If we be punctuall in dignities, precedences, and titles, besides the exposing of our qualities to be examined, tried, and contradicted, we make them vile and contemptible ; for honour, which is estimable being freely given, becomes base when it is sought for, required, and exacted.

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6. When the peacock bristles up his train to behold himself, in raising his fair feathers he shews his own deformities. Fair flowers that grow on the earth wither away by handling. The sweet smell of the mandragora taken a farre off, and but for a short time is most pleasing, but they that smell to it very near, and a long time become stupified and sick: even so honours give a pleasant consolation to those that savour them a far off, and carelessly without staying upon them, or disquieting themselves with them; but to such as affect them, and feed upon them, they are worthy of blame and reprehension.

7. The pursuit and love of virtue begin to make us virtuous; but the pursuit and love of honour begin to make us abject and contemptible. Generous spirits busie not themselves about these poor toys of degrees of honour, and situations; they have other things to do, that belongs to mean, and degenerate spirits.

8. He that may have pearls never loads himself with shells; and such as aspire to virtue vex not themselves for honours. Every one indeed may take the place due to him without prejudice to humility, so that it be done carelessly, and not with contention. For as they that come from Peru, besides gold and silver, bring also  
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apes and parrats, because they neither cost much, nor are burdensome to their ship: so true pretenders to virtue neglect not to take the ranck and place due to them, yet so as it cost them not much care, and attention, and that it may be without incurring trouble, disquiet, disputes, and contentions. Yet speak I not here of those whose dignity concerneth the publick, nor of certain particular occasions upon which great consequences depend; for in that every one ought to keep his due place with prudence and discretion, accompanied with charity and courtesie.

#### CHAP. V.

##### *Of more internall humilitie.*

1. **B**ut thou desirest, Philothea, to be farther advanced in humility; for the performance of that which we have hitherto said is rather wisdom than humilitie: let us therefore passe on further. Many neither will, nor dare consider the graces that God hath given them in particular, fearing that thereby they may fall into vain glory, and self-conceit, wherein in truth they deceive themselves; for since the true means to attain to the love of God (as saith the great Angelicall Doctour) is the consideration of his benefits, the more we know them the more we shall love him; and as particular

cular benefits do more powerfully move us then common, so ought they to be weighed more attentively.

2. Certainly nothing can so much humble us before the mercy of God as the multitude of his benefits, nor before his justice as the multitude of our offences. Let us then consider what he hath done for us, and what we have done against him: and as we consider our sins severally, so let us consider his graces one by one. Let us not fear that the knowledge which he gives us will puff us up, so long as we are attentive to this truth, *that whatsoever is good in us, is not of our selves.*

3. Alas ! mules, cease they to be lumpish, and stinking beasts because they are laden with the precious and perfumed cabinets of the Prince ? *What hast thou which thou hast not received ?* (saith the Apostle) *and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory ?* Nay contrariwise, the lively consideration of favours received renders us humble, because knowledge begets acknowledgement. But if in considering the favours which God hath done us any kind of vanity should tickle us, it will be an infallible remedy to recurre to the contemplation of our ingratitude, of our imperfections, and of our miseries. If we consider what we have done when God was not with us, we  
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shall easily know, that what we do while he is with us is not of our own doing, nor of our own growth; we shall enjoy it indeed, and rejoyce for it, but we shall glorifie God alone because he is the authour of it. So the blessed Virgin confesseth that God had done great things for her, yet is it but to humble her self, and to glorifie God: *My soul* (saith she) *doth magnifie our Lord, because he hath done great things for me.*

4. We use to say many times that we are nothing, that we are misery it self, and the corruption of the world; but we would be loath any man should take us at our word, and publish us abroad to be such as we say we are. Nay we make as if we would run away, and hide our selves, to the end men may run after us, and seek us out; we make shew as if we would indeed be the last, and sit at the lowest end of the rable, but it is in hope to be set with more advantage at the upper end. True humility never makes shew of her self, nor useth many humble words; for she desires not onely to hide other virtues, but also principally to hide her self. And if it were lawful for her to lye, to dissemble, or scandalize her neighbour, she would produce actions of arrogancy, and disdain, that under them she might hide her self, and be



be altogether covered and unknown.

5. My advise therefore is, Philothea, either let us use no words of humility, or let us use them with an inward reality conformable to what we pronounce outwardly. Let us never cast down our eyes but when we humble our hearts; let us not seem to desire to be the lowest, unless we mean it from our heart. Now I hold this rule so general, that I bring no exception: onely I adde, that civility requireth that we offer precedency sometimes to those who without doubt will refuse it; and yet this is no double-dealing, nor false humility, for in this case the onely offer of precedency is a beginning of honour, and since we cannot give it them entirely, we do not ill to give them the beginning. I say the same of some words of honour, and respect, which in rigour seem not true, yet are true enough indeed if the heart of him that pronounceth them have a true intention to honour, and respect him to whom he saith those words. For although the words signifie with some excess that which we would say, yet we do not ill to use them when common custome requireth it: but I wish our words were alwaies suited to our affections, as near as possible to follow in all, and through all, pure simplicity

city and sincerity of heart. A man that is truly humble would rather an other should say of him that he is miserable, that he is contemptible, and that he is nothing worth, then to say it himself; at least, if he know that any man say so he doth not gainsay it, but consents to it with all his heart: for believing it firmly himself, he is glad to have others of the same opinion.

6. Many say that they leave mentall prayer for those that are perfect, that themselves are not worthy to use it. Others protest they dare not communicate often, because they find not themselves pure enough. Others that they fear they should disgrace devotion if they should meddle with it, by reason of their great misery and frailty. Others refuse to employ their talent in the service of God, and of their neighbour, because (say they) they know their own weakness, and that they fear to become proud if they should be instruments of any good, and that in giving light to others they should consume themselves.

7. All this is nothing but artifice, and a kind of humility not onely false, but malicious, whereby tacitely, and subtilly they endeavour to cast an aspersion upon these holy things; or at the best, with the  
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cloke of humility to cover the love of their own opinion, their own humour, and their own sloathfulnesse. *Demand of God a sign either from heaven above, or from the depth of the sea below*; said the Prophet to unhappy Achaz: and he answered; *I will demand none, neither will I tempt God.* O wicked man! he would seem to bear great reverence to God, and under colour of humility excuseth himself from aspiring to that grace which Gods goodnesse offereth him: but seeth he not that when our Lord offereth us his graces, it is pride to refuse them; that the gifts of God oblige us to receive them; and that true humility is to obey, and follow his will, as near as we can? But Gods will is that we become perfect, uniting our selves to him, and imitating him the best we can.

8. The proud man, which trusts in himself, hath just occasion not to dare to undertake any thing; but he that is humble is so much the more couragious, by how much the more weak he acknowledgeth himself; and the more miserable he esteems himself, the more confident he becomes, because he trusts intirely in God, who delights to magnifie his omnipotency by our misery. We must then with an humble, and holy confidence perform whatsoever

soever is judged fit for our advancement, by those that direct our soules.

9. To think we know what we know not is direct folly; to seem to know that which the world knowes we know not is an intolerable vanity. For my part, I would not seem to know even that which I do know; as contrariwise, I would not make my self ignorant. When charity requires it, we must freely and mildly communicate to our neighbour, not only that which is necessary for his instruction, but also that which is profitable for his consolation: for humility, which hideth and concealeth virtues to the end to preserve them, doth neverthelesse, when charity requireth it, discover them to the end to enlarge, increase, and perfect them. Wherein she resembleth a tree in the Isles of Tylos, which at night closeth up her fair carnation flowers, and opens them not till the rising of the Sun; so that the Inhabitants of the Countrey say, that those flowers sleep by night: for so humility covereth, and hideth all our virtues and humane perfections, and letteth them never appear but for charity, which being a virtue not humane, but heavenly, not moral, but divine, is the true sun of virtues, over which she ought alwaies to rule: so that humility which is prejudicial

dicial to charity is undoubtedly false.

10. I would neither make my self more fool, nor more wise then I am : for if humility forbid me to counterfeit my self wise, honesty and sincerity forbid me likewise to counterfeit my self a fool ; for as vanity is contrary to humility , so are affectation and dissembling to simplicity and plain dealing. And it some great servants of God have made themselves seem fooles , that they might be thought abject in the eyes of the world, we must admire them, and not imitate them ; for they had motives that induced them to this excesse, which were so particular, and extraordinary to them , that no man ought from thence to draw any consequence for himself. And as for David, when he danced and leaped before the Ark somewhat more then ordinarily decency required, he did it not to make the world believe he was a fool , but he simply and plainly used those exteriour motions , conformable to the extraordinary and excessive gladnesse which he conceived in his heart. True it is, that when Michol his wife reproached him for it, as guilty of folly, he was not sorry to see himself despised, but persevering in a true and lively representation of his joy, he testified that he was glad to receive a little shame

shame for his God. And consequently I say, that if for acts of true devotion the world esteeme thee mean, abject, and foolish, humility will make thee rejoyce at this happy reproach, the cause whereof is not in thee, but in those that utter it against thee.

## CHAP. VI.

*That humility maketh us to love our own abjection.*

1. I Passe further, and advise thee, Philothea, that in all, and above all thou love thine own abjection. But thou wilt ask me what it is to love our own abjection. In Latine, *abjection* signifies *humility*, and *humility abjection*: so that when our blessed Lady in her sacred hymne saith, that all generations should call her blessed, because God had seen the humility of his handmaid, her meaning is, that our Lord beheld graciously her abjection, and unworthinesse, to heap upon her graces and favours. Yet there is great difference between the virtue of *humility*, and *abjection*: for *abjection* is the lownesse, basenesse, and poornesse that is in us, we being not aware of it; but as for the virtue of *humility*, it is a true knowledge, and voluntary acknowledgment of our abjection.

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2. Now the principal point of this humility consisteth, not onely in this willing acknowledgment of our abjection, but in loving it, and delighting in it; not for want of courage, or generosity, but to extol so much the more the divine Majesty, and to esteem much better our neighbour then our selves. This is that to which I exhort thee: and that thou maicst understand it the better, know, that amongst the afflictions which we suffer some are abject, and others honourable; many can frame themselves to the honourable, but almost none to the abject. Thou seest a devout hermite all ragged, and cold, each one honoureth his torn habit with compassion of his sufferance; but if a poor trades-man, or a poor gentleman be in the same case, men despise and mock them; and behold how their poverty is abject. A religious man receiveth devoutly a sharp censure of his superiour, and a child of his father, and all count this mortification, obedience, and wisdom; but let a Cavalier, or some Lady suffer the like of another, and although it be for the love of God, men will call it cowardinesse, and want of courage.

3. Behold here an other abjection. One hath a canker in his arme, and an other in his face; the first hath onely  
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the disease, but the other with the disease hath contempt, shame, and abjection. I say then that we must not onely love the evil itself, by the virtue of patience, but we must also love the abjection, by the virtue of humility.

4. Moreover, there are abject virtues, and honourable virtues. Patience, meekness, simplicitie, and humilitie it self are virtues which worldly men hold vile and abject: contrariwise, they much esteem wisdom, valour, and liberality. There are also actions of one and the same virtue, whereof some are despised, and others honoured: to give alms, and to pardon injuries, are two acts of charity; the first is honoured of all men, the other contemned in the eyes of the world. A young gentleman, or a young Lady, who will not give themselves over to the disorders of wild and dissolute company, to talk, play, dance, &c. shall be scorned and censured, and their modestie termed hypocrisie, or affectation: to love this, is to love our abjection.

5. Behold another sort of abjection. We go to visit the sick; If I be sent to the most miserable, that will be an abjection to me according to the world, and therefore will I love it. If I be sent to a person of quality, it is an abjection according to the spirit, for there is not so much

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virtue nor merit, and therefore I will love this abjection. One falls in the midst of the street, and besides his fall receives shame, this is an abjection to be loved. There are also faults which have no other ill in them but onely abjection; and humility requires not that we should commit them of set purpose, but it requires that we vex not our selves when we shall have committed them. Such are certain fooleries, incivilities, and incircumspections, which as we ought to avoid before they be committed, in order to civility and discretion; so when they are committed, we must be content with the abjection that cometh thereby, and accept it willingly, that so we may practise holy humility.

6. I say yet more: if I have disordered my self through passion, or dissolution, and have spoken undecent words, where-with God and my neighbour are offended, I will repent my self heartily with true sorrow, and endeavour to make the best reparation I can for the offence; but yet I will be content with the abjection, and the shame which it brings me: and if the one could be separated from the other, I would most chearfully cast away the sinne, and humbly retain the abjection.

7. But though we love the abjection which followeth the evil, yet we must not neglect

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neglect to redresse the evil that caused it by fit and lawfull means, especially when the evil is of importance: As if I have some shamefull disease in my face, I will endeavour to have it cured, but not to have the abjection forgotten which I received thereby. If I have committed some folly which is offensive to none, I will make no excuse for it, because although it were a fault yet it is not permanent: I cannot then excuse it, but onely in respect of the abjection which it brings me, and that humility permits not. But if through folly or indiscretion I have offended, or scandalized any one, I will repair the offence by some true excuse, because the evil is permanent, and that charity obligeth me to satisfie for it. Furthermore, it happeneth sometimes that charity commandeth us to remove the abjection for the good of our neighbour, to whom our reputation is necessary; but in that case, though we remove the abjection from before our neighbours eyes, to prevent his scandall, yet must we carefully shut it up, and hide it in our hearts for his edification.

8. But thou wouldest know, Philothea, which are the best abjections. I tell thee clearly, that the most profitable to our souls, and most acceptable to God, are those which come to us by accident, or by the

condition of our life ; because we chuse them not, but receive them as they are sent by God, whose choice is alwayes better then our own. But if we were to chuse them, the greatest are the best : and those are esteemed the greatest which are most contrary to our inclinations ; (so that they be conformable to our vocation ) for to speak once for all , our own choice blasts almost all our virtues.

9. O, who will give us the grace to say truly with that great King, *I have chosen to be an abject in the house of God, rather then to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners?* none certainly, dear Philothea, but he who to exalt us lived and died in such sort, as that he was the scorn of men, and the abjection of the people. I have said many things to thee which will seem hard when thou shalt consider them, but believe me, they will be sweeter then sugar or honey when thou shalt put them in practise.

### CHAP. VII.

*How to keep our good name in the practise of Humility.*

1. PRAISE, honour, and glory are not given to men for every ordinary virtue, but for some excellent one : for by praise we seek to perswade others to value the excellency of some men ; by honour we protest

protest that we our selves do esteem them; and glory in my judgement is nothing else, but a certain lustre of reputation which springs from the concourse of many praises and honours. So that honours and praises are like precious stones, from a heap of which riseth a lustre like enamelling. Now humility not being able to endure that we should have any desire of **excelling**, or being preferred before others, can neither permit that we should hunt after praise, honour, or glory, which are due to excellency alone; but yet she consents to the counsell of the wise-man, who admonisheth us to have care of our reputation; because a good name is an estimation not of any excellency, but onely of a simple and ordinary honesty, and integrity of life, which humility hindereth us not to acknowledge in our selves, nor by consequence to desire the reparation of it. It is true, that humility would contemn good fame, if charity stood not in need of it; but because it is one of the foundations of humane societie, and that without it we are not onely unprofitable, but prejudiciall to the publick, by reason of the scandall which it receiveth thereby, charity requireth, and humility consenteth that we should desire it, and carefully preserve it.

2. Again, as leaves, which in them-

selves are of no great value, neverthelesse are very necessary, not onely to beautifie the trees, but also to preserve the fruit whilst it is young and tender: so a good report, which of it self is not much to be desired, is notwithstanding most profitable, not onely for the ornament of our life, but also for the preservation of our virtues, especially while they are yet weak and tender. The obligation of maintaining our reputation, and of being such as we are esteemed to be, forceth a generous courage. Let us preserve our virtues, dear Philothea, because they are acceptable to God, the chief and soveraign object of all our actions. But as they who would keep fruits are not content to preserve them with sugar, but put them also in vessels fit to keep them; so, although the love of God be the principall preserver of our virtues, yet may we further employ our good name, as most convenient and profitable to that purpose.

3. Yet must we not be over earnest, exact, and punctuall in this preservation: for such as are so tender and sensible of their reputation, are like them that for every slight indisposition take physick, for they thinking to conserve their health, do utterly overthrow it; and these endeavouring to maintain so tenderly their reputation,

tion, lose it entirely; for by this tenderness they become fantastical, mutinous, insolent, and provoke the malice of detractors.

4. Dissimulation, and contempt of an injury or calumny is ordinarily a farre better remedy then resentment, dispute, or revenge: for contempt causes them to vanish, whereas if we resent them, we seem to avow them. Crocodiles hurt none but those that fear them; nor detraction, but such as vex themselves with it. Excessive fear of losing our estimation argues great distrust of the foundation thereof, which is the truth of a good life. Towns that have wooden bridges over great rivers fear lest they should be carried away by every little flood; but they that have them of stone fear onely extraordinary inundations: so they that have a soul truly Christian contemn ordinarily overflowing of injurious tongues; but those that find themselves weak are disquieted with every discourse. Indeed Philothea, he that strives to keep a good reputation with all, loses it with all; and he deserves to lose his honour, who seeks it of those whose vices make them infamous.

5. Reputation is but a signe to shew where virtue is lodged; it is virtue then that must be preferred in all, and before all:

wherefore if any call thee hypocrite because thou givest thy self to devotion, or esteeme thee a coward because thou hast pardoned an injury, laugh at all that; for besides that such judgements are made by foolish and ignorant people, we must not forsake virtue, nor wander out of the way of it, although we were to lose our reputation, because we must preferre the fruit before the leaves, and interiour and spirituall before all externall good. It is lawfull to be jealous, but not idolaters of our reputation: and as we must not offend the eyes of the good, so must we not strive to satisfie those of the wicked. The beard is an ornament to the face of a man, and the hair to that of a woman; if one pull away by the roots the beard from the chin, and the hair from the head, it will very hardly grow again; but if it be onely cut, nay though it be shaven it will soon come again, and will grow stronger, and thicker then before: so although our reputation be cut, yea though it be shaven by detra-cting tongues, (which David saith is like a sharp rasor) we must not therefore be troubled, for it will soon spring forth again, not onely as fair as ever it was, but much more firm and durable. But if neverthelesse our vices, our unworthinesse, and wicked course of life take away our reputation, it will  
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very hardly return, because it is pulled up by the root : for the root of renown is goodnesse and integrity, which, as long as they are in us, can alwayes recover the honour due to them.

6. When vain conversation, fond loves, and haunting of idle company blast our reputation, we must forsake them ; for a good name is of more price then all vain contentments. But if for the exercise of piety, for advancement in devotion, and aspiring to eternall happinesse men grumble and murmur at us, let us leave these dogs to bark against the moon ; for if ever they be able to cast an aspersi<sup>o</sup>n upon our good name, and by that means to cut, and shave the hair and beard of our reputation, they will notwithstanding spring up again, and the rasour of detraction will be advantageous to our honour, as the pruning knife to the vine, which makes it abound and multiply in fruit.

7. Let us fix our eyes alwayes upon Jesus Christ crucified, and march on in his service with confidence and sincerity, yet prudently and discreetly: he will be the protectour of our reputation, and if he suffer it to be taken from us, it will be either to render us a better, or to make us profit in holy humility, whereof one onely ounce is better then a thousand pounds of



honours. If we be unjustly defamed, let us meekly oppose truth against calumny; if calumny persevere, let us likewise persevere in humilitie, resigning our reputation together with our soul into Gods hands, we cannot secure it better. Let us serve God in good and ill fame, according to S. Pauls example, that we may say with David, *for thee (O Lord) have I suffered shame, and confusion hath covered my face.* I except nevertheless certain crimes so horrid, and infamous that no man ought to suffer the shame of them, if he can justly acquit himself; and also certain persons, upon whose reputation depends the edification of many: for in these cases we must peaceably seek reparation for the wrong received, according to the opinion of all Divines.

#### CHAP. VIII.

*Of meeknesse towards our neighbours; and remedies against anger.*

1. **T**He holy Chrisme; which by Apostolicall tradition we use in the Church of God for confirmations and consecrations, is composed of oile of Olives mingled with baulme; which amongst other things represents to us the two dear and beloved virtues which shined in the sacred person of our Lord, and which he most particularly

larly did commend to us, as if by them our heart were specially to be consecrated to his service, and dedicated to his imitation : *Learn of me* (saith he) *for I am meek, and humble of heart.* Humilitie makes us perfect towards God, and mildnesse towards our neighbour. The baulm, which (as I said before) sinketh to the bottome amongst all other liquours, representeth humilitie ; and the oile of Olives, which swimmeth alwaies above, signifies mildnesse, and affabilitie, which are above all things, and excell amongst virtues, as being the flowers of charitie, which (according to S. Bernard) is then most perfect when it is not onely patient but also mild and gentle. But take heed, Philothea, that this mysticall Chrisme composed of meeknesse and humilitie, be with in thy heart ; for it is one of the greatest subtilties of the devill to make many entertain themselves with words, and exterior appearances of these two virtues, who not examining thoroughly their inward affections, esteem themselves humble and meek, whereas in truth they are nothing lesse : and this may be easily discovered, because for all their ceremonious mildnesse and humilitie, at the least crosse word or injury they swell with incredible arrogancie.

2. They say that those who have taken  
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the preservative commonly called *the grace of Saint Paul*, swell not at all by the biting and stinging of vipers, provided that the preservative be of the best: in like manner, when humility and mildnesse are good and true they preserve from the heat and tumours which injuries are wont to raise in mens hearts. But if being stung and bit by detractours and enemies we become fierce and enraged, it is a sign that our humility and meeknesse is not true and cordiall, but artificiall and counterfeit.

3. That holy Patriarch Joseph sending back his brethren from Egypt to his fathers house, he gave them this onely advise; *be not angry amongst your selves by the way*. I say the same to thee, Philothea; this wretched life is but a passage to happinesse, let us not be angry one with another in this way, but march with the troupe of our brethren and companions meekly, peaceably, and lovingly: and I say to thee absolutely and without exception, be not angry at all, if it be possible, and entertain no pretext whatsoever to open the gate of thy heart to anger; for Saint James tells us very positively, and without reservation, *The anger of man worketh not the justice of God*. We must indeed resist evil, and suppress the vices of them who are under our charge couragiously and resolutely, but

but yet mildely and peaceably. Nothing so soon appeaseth the Elephant being angred as the sight of a little lamb; and nothing breaketh so easily the force of a cannon-shot as wooll. We esteem not so much the correction which proceeds from passion, though it be accompanied with never so much reason, as that which hath no other motive then reason alone; for the reasonable soul, being naturally subject to reason, is never subject to passion, but tyrannically: and therefore when reason is accompanied with passion she maketh her self odious, her just government being corrupted by the fellowship of tyranny.

4. Princes do honour to their people when they visite them with a peaceable train; but when they lead armies (though it be for the common good) their presence is alwayes unwelcome: for although they cause military discipline to be rigourously observed among their souldiers, yet be they never so exact, some disorder will alwayes arise, whereby the countrey-man will be oppressed. Even so, as long as reason ruleth, and peaceably exerciseth chastisements, corrections, and reprehensions, although rigourously and exactly, every man loveth and approveth it; but when she brings with her wrath, choler, and rage  
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(which **S. Augustine** calleth her souldiers) she makes her self more feared then loved, and even her own heart becomes thereby vexed and oppressed. It is better (saith the same **S. Augustine**, writing to **Profuturus**) to denie entrance to just and equitable anger, then to entertain it be it never so little, becaule being once admitted it is hard to be quit of it, for it entereth as a little twig, and in a moment groweth greater, and becomes a beam. If it can but once gain the night of us, and that the sun shall set upon our anger, (which the **Apostle** forbiddeth) converting it self into hatred, there is almost no means to be freed from it; for it nourisheth it self with a thousand false perswasions, since there was never any angred-man that thought his anger unjust.

5. It is better then to resolve to live without choler then to use choler moderately and discreetly; and when by imperfection and frailtie we find our selves surprised therewith, it is better to resist it speedily then to dally with it; for, give it never so little leisure, and it will be mistress of the place, like the Serpent, which can easily draw in his whole body where he can get in his head.

6. But thou wilt say, how shall I resist it? Thou must, my **Philothea**, at the first touch thou shalt feel of it, speedily assemble

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thy forces, not violently, but mildely, and yet seriously: for as we see in the audiences of divers senates, or courts of justice, the ushers crying *Peace* make more noise then those whom they would silence; so it happeneth many times, that endeavouring with violence to repress our choler, we stir up more trouble in our hearts then the choler had done, and the heart thus troubled is no more master of it self. After this meek resistance practise the advise which S. Augustine, being now old, gave to the young Bishop Auxilius: Do (saith he) that which a man should do. If that befall thee which the man of God mentioned in the Psalm, *my eye is troubled for anger*, have recourse to God crying, *have mercy upon me O Lord*, that he may stretch forth his right hand to repress thy anger. I mean, we must invoke the assistance of God when we find our selves assaulted by choler, in imitation of the Apostles when they were tossed with winds, and tempest upon the waters; for he will command our passions to cease, and a great calme shall follow. But the prayer made against present and pressing choler must alwayes be meek and calme, and not violent: and this rule is to be observed in all remedies which we use against this evill. Moreover, as soon as thou perceivest that thou hast done  
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any act of choler, repair the fault by an act of mildnesse, exercised chearfully towards the same person against whom thou hast been moved. For as it is a soveraign remedy against a lie to unsay it presently; so it is a good remedy against anger to repair it instantly by a contrary act of mildnesse: for green wounds (they say) are most easily cured.

7. Again, when thou art in tranquillity, and without any occasion of choler, make great provision of meeknesse and gentlenesse, speaking all thy words and doing all thy actions little and great in the mildest manner thou canst, calling to mind that the spouse in the Canticles hath not only honey in her lips, and on the top of her tongue, but also under her tongue, that is, in her breast, and not honey onely but also milk: so we must not onely have our words sweet towards our neighbour, but our whole breast, that is to say, the interior of our soul. Neither must we have onely this sweetnesse of honey which is pleasant and fragrant, that is to say, sweetnesse of civil conversation with strangers, but also the sweetnesse of milk amongst those of our family, & our near neighbours: wherein they greatly fail, who in the street seem Angels and in their houses devils.

## C H A P. I X.

*Of meeknesse towards our selves.*

I. **O**NE of the best exercises which we can perform of meeknesse, is that whereof the subject is in our selves; that is, never to be vexed against our selves, nor our imperfections: for though reason require that we should be displeased, and sorry when we commit any faults, yet we must alwayes avoid all malicious, spiteful, and cholerick displeasure, wherein many do highly offend, who stirred up to choler, are angry and vexed to see themselves vexed; for by this means they keep their heart steeped in choler; and though the second anger seem to destroy the first, yet notwithstanding it serves to open a passage of a new choler to the first occasion that shall be offered. Besides, these angers, frettings, and vexations against our selves tend to pride, and have no other source then self-love, which troubleth and disquieteth it self to see us unperfect. We must then have a dislike of our faults, which may be quiet, sober, and moderate. For as a Judge punisheth malefactours much better when he squares his sentence by reason, and pronounces it with a calm and quiet spirit, then when he is violently transported with passion,  
because



because judging in passion he punishes not the faults according as they are, but according as he is himself: so we correct our selves much better by calm and sober repentances, then by those which are violent and cholerick; for repentance done with violence is never according to the quality of our faults, but according to our inclinations. For example, he that affecteth chastity will vex himself with an incomparable vexation at the least fault that he shall commit against that vertue, and will but laugh at a grosse slander which he shall have uttered. On the other side, he that hateth detraction will afflict himself for having murmured a little, and make no account of a grosse fault committed against chastity: and so of others. And this springeth from no other fountain, then that they judge not their conscience by reason, but by passion.

2. Believe me, Philothea, as the reproofs of a father given sweetly and affectionately, have far more power with the child to reclaim him then choler and anger: so when our heart shall have done any fault, if we reprehend it with a quiet and sweet admonition, having more compassion upon it then passion against it, and gently encouraging it to amendment, the  
repentance

repentance following thereupon will penetrate further, and strike deeper then a vexing, angry, and storming repentance.

3. For my self, if (for example) I had a great affection not to fall into the sin of vanity, and yet had fallen deep into it, I would not reprehend my heart in this manner; *art thou not miserable, and abominable, that after so many resolutions hast suffered thy self to be carried away by vanity? die with shame, lift no more thy eyes to heaven, blind, impudent, and traytour to thy God.* But I would rather thus reprehend it in reason and compassion; *go to, my poor heart we are now fallen into the ditch which we had so often resolved to escape; well, let us out again, and forsake it for ever, let us call upon the mercy of God, and hope that it will assist us to be more constant hence forward; and let us put our selves into the way of humility. Courage, from this day forward we will stand upon our guard; God will help us, we shall prosper.* And upon this reprehension would I build a firm and constant resolution never to fall again into that fault, using to that end the meanes convenient, especially the advise of my directour.

4. But if notwithstanding any man find that

that his heart cannot be sufficiently moved with this sweet reprehension, he may use a more sharp and rough reproof to excite it to a profound confusion; provided, that after he hath thus roundly rebuked his heart, he end with a consolation, closing up all his anger with a sweet and holy confidence in God, imitating that great penitent, who seeing his soul afflicted, raised it up in this manner; *Why art thou sad, O my soul, and why dost thou trouble me? hope in God, for I will confesse to him, the saving health of my countenance and my God.*

5. Raise up then thy heart fair and softly when it shall fall, humbling thy self profoundly before God, by acknowledging thine own misery without astonishment at thy fall, for it is no wonder that weakness should be feeble, or misery wretched: detest neverthelesse from thy heart that thou hast offended God, and with great courage and confidence in his mercy, return to the way of virtue which thou hadst forsaken.

### CHAP. X.

*That we must treat of businesse with care,  
but without vexation and  
solicitude.*

I. **T**He care and diligence which we ought

ought to have in our affaires are things much different from solicitude, anxiety, and vexation. The Angels have care of our salvation, and procure it with diligence, yet they are not solicitous or anxious: for care and diligence are part of their charity; but solicitude and anxiety would be intirely contrary to their felicity; since care and diligence may be accompanied with tranquillity of mind, but solicitude and anxiety never.

2. Be careful then and diligent, Philothea, in all the affaires thou hast in thy charge, for God having intrusted them to thee, he will that thou take care of them; but if it be possible, be not in vexation and anxiety for them, that is to say, undertake them not with unquietness, and solicitude, nor spend thy self about them; for all kind of violence disturbs the reason and the judgment, and hinders us from doing that well in which we are so earnest.

3. When our Lord reprehended S. Martha, he sayed; *Martha, Martha, thou art solicitous, and troublest thy self about many things.* Dost thou observe? if she had been simply careful she had not been troubled, but because she was in anxiety and unquietnesse, she vexed and troubled her self, and for that our Lord reprehends her. Rivers which glide peaceably through  
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the vallies bear great boats, and rich merchandize, and the rain which falleth gently in the open fields maketh them fruitful in grasse and corn; but torrents, and rivers which run rapidly ruine the bordering countrey, and are unprofitable for traffique, as likewise the vehement and tempestuous raynes furrow the fields and medowes. Never was work well done with too much violence, and earnestnesse. We must hasten leisurely: (saith the proverb) He that hastens too much (saith Solomon) is in danger of stumbling and bruising his feet. We do our businesse soon enough when we do it well. Droans make more noise, and are more earnest then bees, but they make onely wax and not honey: so they that spend themselves with a tormenting anxiety, and an eager solicitude never do much nor well.

4. Flies disquiet us not by their strength, but by their number: so great affaires vex us not so much as little when they are in great number. Whatsoever businesse then befall thee, receive them with quietnesse, and endeavour to dispatch them in order one after another; for if thou strive to do all at once, or in disorder, thou wilt overcharge and weaken thy spirit, and probably lye tired under the burthen.

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5. In all thy businesse, rely wholly upon Gods providence, by which alone thy designs must prosper : labour nevertheless discreetly on thy part to co-operate with it, and then believe that if thou trust intirely in God, the successe which followeth shall be alwaies the most profitable for thee , seem it to thee good or bad, according to thy particular judgement. Do as little children, who with one hand hold fast by their father , and with the other gather straw-berries or mul-berries along the hedges : so thou, gathering and managing the affaires of this world with one hand, with the other hold alwaies fast the hand of thy heavenly father, turning thy self towards him from time to time, to see if thy employments be pleasing to him. And take heed above all things that thou let not go his hand, and his protection, thinking to gather more ; for if he forsake thee , thou wilt not be able to go a step without falling to the ground. My meaning is, Philothea, that amidst thy affaires, and ordinary businesse which require not so earnest an attention, thou think upon God more then upon thy affaires ; and when thy affaires be of so great importance that to be well done they require thy whole attention , then also from time to time look towards God , as they

they do that sail upon the sea, who to go to the land which they desire, look more up to heaven then down upon the Sea whereon they sail : so will God work with thee, in thee, and for thee, and all thy labours shall be accompanied with consolations.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Of Obedience.*

1. **C**harity alone placeth us in perfection, but obedience, chastity, and poverty are the three great means to attain to it. Obedience consecrateth our heart, chastity our body, and poverty our goods to the love and service of God. These are the three branches of the spirituall crosse, and all three grounded upon the fourth, which is humility. I will say nothing of these three virtues as they are vowed solemnly, for so they concern onely religious persons; nor as they are simply vowed, for though a vow giveth alwaies much valew and merit to all virtues, yet to make us perfect it is not necessary they should be vowed, so they be observed. For though being vowed, and that solemnly, they place a man in the state of perfection; yet to come to perfection it self it sufficeth that they be observed: for there is great difference betwixt the state of perfection, and

and perfection it self; since all Bishops, and religious persons are in the state of perfection, yet are they not all in perfection, as we see but too plainly. Let us endeavour then, Philothea, to practise well these three virtues, every one according to his vocation: for though they place us not in the state of perfection, yet they will bring us to perfection it self; and we are all obliged to practise these three virtues, though not all after one fashion.

2. There are two sorts of obedience, the one necessary, the other voluntary. By the necessarie thou oughtest humbly to obey thy ecclesiasticall superiours, as the Pope, and the Bishop, the curate, and such as are authorised by them: thou oughtest to obey thy civil superiours, as thy Prince, and the Magistrates which he hath established over thy countrey: and finally, thou must obey thy domesticall superiours, as thy father and mother, master and mistress. This obedience is called necessary, because no man can exempt himself from the dutie of obeying these superiours; God having placed them in authority to command and govern, each one according to the charge which they have over us. Obey then their commands, and that is of necessity. But to be perfect, follow their

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counsell also, and even their desires and inclinations so farre as charity and discretion will permit thee. Obey them when they shall command any thing pleasing to thee, as to eat, to recreate thy self: for though it seem no great virtue to obey in these cases, yet would it be a great vice to disobey. Obey them in things indifferent, as to wear this or that suit of cloaths, to go this way or that, to sing or to be silent; and this will be very commendable obedience. Obey them in hard and unpleasant things; and this will be perfect obedience. Obey I say mildly without reply, readily without delay, chearfully without repining, and above all obey lovingly, for love of him who for love of us made himself obedient even to the death of the Crosse, and who (as S. Bernard saith) did rather chuse to lose his life then his obedience.

3. To learn to obey easily thy superiours condescend easily to thy equalls, yielding to their opinions in what is not vicious, without contention or harshnesse; accommodate thy self willingly to the desires of thy inferiours, so farre as reason will permit, and never exercise any imperious authority over them so long as they are good. It is an abuse to believe that we would obey easily if we were religious, when

we find it difficult to render obedience to such as God hath placed over us.

4. We call that obedience voluntary whereunto we oblige our selves by our own election, and which is not imposed upon us by another. We chuse not ordinarily our Prince, our Bishop, our father or mother, nor many times our wives, nor husbands; but we chuse our confessor and director. If then in chusing we make vow to obey, (as did the holy mother Teresa, who, as we have said above, besides her obedience solemnly vowed to the Superiour of her order, bound her self by a simple vow to obey her father Gratian,) or if without a vow we dedicate our selves to the obedience of any one, alwayes this obedience is called voluntary, because of the ground, which depends upon our will and choise.

5. We must obey all our Superiours, but every one according to the charge he hath over us; as in civil and publick affairs we must obey our Prince, in ecclesiasticall our Prelates, in domesticall our father, our husband, and our maister, in the private conduct of the soul our ghostly father or director.

6. Cause thy ghostly father to impose upon thee all the actions of pietie which thou oughtest to perform, for so

they will be more excellent, and of a double grace and goodnesse; the one of themselves, because they are good, the other of obedience, because they are commanded, and in virtue whereof they are performed. Happie are the obedient, for God will never suffer them to go astray.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the necessity of chastitie.*

1. CHastitie is the Lillie of virtues, it maketh men almost equall to Angels. Nothing is beautifull but by purity, and the purity of men is chastitie. Chastitie is called *honesty*, and the possession thereof *honour*; it is named *integritie*, and the contrary thereof *corruption*. Briefly it hath its glory apart, to be the fair and unspotted virtue of soul and body.

2. It is never lawfull to draw any unchast delight from our bodies in any sort ~~whatsoever~~, but onely in lawfull marriage, whereof the sanctity may by just recompence repair the damage we receive in that delectation. And yet even in marriage the honesty of the intention must be observed, to the end that if there be any indecency in the lust which is exercised, there may be nothing

nothing but puritie in the will of him that exerciseth it.

3. The chaste heart is like the mother pearl, which can receive no drop of water but such as comes from heaven : for it can entertain no pleasure but that of marriage, which is ordained from heaven ; more then that it is not lawfull so much as to think a lustfull thought voluntarily, and deliberately.

4. For the first degree of this virtue, Philothea, take heed of entertaining any kind of pleasure that is prohibited, as all those are which are taken out of marriage, or even in marriage when they are contrary to the rule thereof. For the second, refrain as much as is possible from all unprofitable and superfluous delights, although lawfull and permitted. For the third, set not thy affections upon pleasures and delights ordained and commanded ; for though we must use necessary delights, I mean those which concern the institution of holy marriage, yet we must never set our heart and mind upon them.

5. Moreover every one hath great need of this virtue. They who are in widowhood ought to have a courageous chasticie, to despise not onely the present or future objects, but to resist the imagination which for-

mer pleasures lawfully received in marriage may produce in their minds, and make them more subject to unclean allurements. For this cause S. Augustine admireth the purity of his dear Alipius, who had wholly forgotten and despised the pleasures of the flesh, of which yet he had sometimes tasted in his youth.

6. And in truth while the fruits are intire they may be kept, some in straw, some in sand, and some in their own leaves; but being once cut or bruised, it is almost impossible to preserve them but by honey and sugar: So chastity which is intire may many wayes be kept; but being once violated it cannot be preserved but by an excellent devotion, which (as I have often repeated) is the honey and sugar of the spirit.

7. Virgins have need of a marvellous sincere and tender chastity, to banish from their hearts all kind of curious thoughts, and to despise with an absolute contempt all sorts of unclean pleasures; which indeed deserve not to be desired by men, since they are fitter for asses and swine. Let then these pure souls never doubt but that chastitie is incomparably better then all which is incompatible with it; for, as S. Hierom saith, the enemy importuneth virgins violently to the triall of these lusts, representing

senting them infinitely more pleasant and delightfull then indeed they are, which many times troubleth them much, whilst ( as this holy father saith ) they esteem that most sweet which they do not know.

8. The little flie seeing the flame, hovereth curiously about it, to trie whether it be as sweet as it is fair, and carried away with this fanisie, perisheth at the very first triall : so these young people suffer themselves oftentimes to be so possessed with the false and foolish esteem which they have of the pleasure of voluptuous flames, that after many curious thoughts, in fine they ruine and lose themselves in them ; more foolish in this then the flies , for they have some cause to imagine that the fire is sweet, because it is beautifull , but these knowing that which they seek to be extreemly dishonest, cease not for all that to prosecute their foolish and brutish delight. But as for those who are married, it is most true ( though the vulgar cannot conceive it ) that chastity is most necessary for them : for in respect of them it consisteth not in abstaining absolutely from carnall pleasures, but in being moderate in the use of them. Now as this commandment, *Be angry, but sinne not*, is, in my opinion, harder then this, *be not angry*, which is rather given to avoid anger then to regu-

late it : so is it far easier to keep our selves altogether from fleshly pleasures then to keep a moderation in them. True it is, that the holy liberty of marriage hath a particular force to extinguish the fire of concupiscence ; but the frailtie of them that enjoy it passeth easily from permission to abuse. And as we see many rich men steal, not for want but for covetousnesse : so likewise we see many married people exceed by intemperance and incontineney, notwithstanding the lawfull objects wherein they ought and might contain themselves ; their concupiscence being like wild fire, which runneth burning here and there, without resting in any one place. It is alwayes dangerous to take violent purgations ; for if we take more then we should, or if we be not well prepared much damage is received thereby. Marriage was blest and ordained in part for a remedie against concupiscence : and no doubt, it is a very good one, but yet violent, and consequently dangerous if it be not discreetly used.

9. Moreover, the varietie of humane affairs, besides long diseases, many times separates husbands from their wives ; and therefore married people have need of two kinds of chastitie ; the one for absolute abstinence when they are separated upon just occasions, the other for moderation  
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when they are together. **S.** Katharine of Siena saw amongst the damned many souls grievously tormented for violating the sanctity of marriage, which happened not for the greatnesse of the sinne, (saith she) for murthers, and blasphemies are more enormous, but because they that commit it make no conscience of it, and continue long therein.

10. Thou seest then that chastitie is necessary for all sorts of people : *Follow peace with all men, (saith the Apostle) and holinesse of life, without which none shall see God:* where by holinesse is understood chastity, as **S.** Hierom, and **S.** Chrysostome observe. No, Philothea, none shall see God without chastitie; none shall dwell in his holy tabernacle that are not pure of heart: and as our Saviour himself sayeth, dogs and unchast people shall be banished from thence; and *happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

### CHAP. XIII.

*Advises how to preserve Chastitie.*

1. **BE** exceeding diligent in turning away from all occasions and allurements of incontinencie; for this vice worketh insensibly, and from little beginnings advances to great mischiefs, which are alwaies more easie to avoid then to cure.

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2. Humane bodies are like glasse, which cannot be carried touching one another without danger of breaking; and like fruits, which be they never so sound and seasonable, yet by touching one another are impaired. Water it self in a vessel, be it never so fresh, being once touched by any beast cannot long retain its freshnesse. Never suffer any, Philothea, to touch thee unchastely, neither in mirth, nor love: for though peradventure chastity may be preserved in those actions more light then malicious, yet the freshnesse and flower of chastitie receiveth alwayes detriment and losse. But to suffer thy self to be touched dishonestly is the utter ruine of chastitie.

3. Chastity dependeth upon the heart as her source, yet regardeth the body as her matter. And therefore she may loose her self by all the exteriour senses of the body, and by the thoughts and desires of the heart. It is lasciviousnesse to behold, to hear, to speak, to smell, to touch any dishonest thing, when the heart entertains it self, and takes pleasure therein. S. Paul saith positively, *Let not fornication be so much as once named amongst you.*

4. The Bees will not onely not touch carrion, but avoid and hate extreemly all unsavoury smells proceeding from it. The sacred spouse in the Canticles hath her hands

hands distilling myrrhe, the antidote against corruption; her lipps are bound up with a scarlet ribband, the mark of modestie in words; she hath the eyes of doves by reason of their clearneffe; she weareth golden ear-rings in token of purity; her nose is compared to the cedars of Libanus, which are incorruptible wood: Such ought to be the devout soul, chaste, honest, clean in hands, lipps, eyes, ears, and all her body.

5. To this purpose will I represent to thee a saying, which the ancient Father John Cassian relateth as from the mouth of great S. Basil, who speaking of himself said; *I know not what belongeth to womer, yet am I not a virgin.* Certainly, Chastity may be lost as many wayes as there are kinds of incontineney and lasciviousnesse, which according as they are great or little, some weaken it, some wound it, and others kill it out right. There are certain familiarities, and indiscreet, foolish, and sensuall passions which, to speak properly, do not violate chastitie, yet they weaken it, leave it languishing, and stain her beautifull whitenesse. There are other private familiarities and passions, not onely indiscreet, but vicious; not onely fond, but dishonest; not onely sensuall, but carnall; and by these chastitie is at least sorely wounded: I say, at the least, because it dyeth and perisheth  
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altogether, when these fooleries and dalliances cause in the flesh the uttermost effect of voluptuous delight ; for then chastity perisheth more unworthily, wickedly, and miserably, then when it is lost by fornication, yea by adultery, and incest, since these later kinds of dishonesty are but sins, but the former ( as Tertullian saith in his book of chastity ) are monsters of iniquity and sinne. Now neither Cassian, nor I believe S. Basil spake of any such disorder, when he accused himself to be no virgin ; but onely of evil and lustfull thoughts, which though they had not defiled his body yet had they contaminated his heart, of the chastenesse whereof all generous souls are exceeding jealous.

6. Haunt not immodest persons, principally if they be impudent, as for the most part they are: for as the he goats touching the sweet-almond trees with their tongues make them become bitter ; so these corrupted souls, and infected hearts, scarce speak to any of either sex, but they cause them in some sort to fall from modesty ; they have poison in their eyes, and in their breath like Basiliskes. But contrariwise, keep company with chaste and virtuous people ; meditate and reade often holy things ; for the word of God is chaste, and maketh them chaste that delight therein : which made David

compare it to the Topaz, a pretious stone whose propertie is to allwage the ardour of concupiscence.

7. Keep thy self alwayes near and close to Jesus Christ crucified, both spiritually by meditation, and really by holy Communion: for as they who lie upon the herb *Agnus castus* become chaste; so thou resting thy heart upon our Saviour, (who is the true chaste, and immaculate lamb) thou shalt soon find thy soul, and thy heart cleansed from all impurity & incontinency.

#### CHAP. XIV.

*Of poverty in spirit to be observed in riches.*

I BLESSED are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven: cursed then be the rich in spirit, for the misery of hell is for them. He is rich in spirit who hath his riches in his spirit, or his spirit in his riches; he is poor in spirit who hath no riches in his spirit, nor his spirit in riches. The Halcyons make their nests no bigger then the palm of a hand, and leave onely one little hole in them, on the upper side, they place them upon the sea shore, and make them so firm and impenetrable that the waves surprising them the water can never get into them, but keeping alwayes above they remain in the sea, upon the sea,

sea, and masters of the sea. Thy heart, dear Philothea, ought to be like that, open onely towards heaven, and impenetrable to riches, and transitory things: if thou hast them, keep thy heart free from their affections, let it be alwayes above them; and amongst riches let it be without riches, and master of riches. No, lodge not this heavenly spirit in earthly goods, let it be alwayes above them, never in them.

2. There is great difference betwixt having poyson, and being poysoned. All Apothecaries almost have poyson to use upon diverse occasions, but yet they are not poisoned, because they have not poison in their bodies but in their thops: so thou mayest have riches without being poisoned with them, if thou keep them in thy purse or in thy house, and not in thy heart. To be rich in effect, and poor in affection, is the greatest happineffe of a Christian: for he hath by that means the commodity of riches for this world, and the merit of poverty for the world to come.

3. Alas! Philothea, no man will confesse himself covetous, every one disavows that basnesse and vilenesse of heart: they excuse themselves upon the great charge of children which oppresseth them; upon wisdom which requireth that men should settle themselves in the world; they never

ver have too much, some necessities are alwayes found out to get more. Nay the most covetous will not onely not confesse himself to be such, but thinketh in his conscience that he is not so. No, for covetousnesse is a monstrous feaver, which becomes so much more insensible, by how much more violent and burning it is.

4. Moyles saw that holy fire which burned in the bush and yet consumed it not: but this profane fire of avarice consumerth and devoureth the covetous person and yet burneth not at all; at least in the middelt of his heats and burnings, he boasterh of the coolest freshnesse in the world, and esteemerh his insatiable drought to be a naturall and pleasing thirst.

5. If thou desire ardently, and solicitously the riches which thou hast not, it is a folly to say that thou wouldst not have them unjustly; for thou dost not cease to be covetous for all that. He that desireth earnestly and impatiently to drink, albeit he would drink water onely, yet is it a sign he hath a feaver.

6. O Philothea, I know not whether it be a just desire to covet to have justly that which an other justly possesseth; for it seemeth that by this desire we would profite our selves by the dammage of others. He that justly possesseth any thing, hath  
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he not more reason to keep it justly then we to desire it justly ? And why then extend we our desire to his possession, to deprive him of it ? If this desire be just, yet certainly it is not charitable ; for we would not in any case that another man should desire, although justly, that which we would justly keep. This was the sinne of Achab, who desired to have Naboths vineyard justly, which Naboth much more justly desired to keep : Achab desired it ardently, and impatiently, and therefore offended God.

7. Stay, dear Philothea, to desire thy neighbours goods till he desire to part with them ; for then his desire will render thine not onely just, but charitable also ; for I am willing thou shouldest take care to augment thy substance, so it may be done not onely justly, but leasurely and charitably.

8. If thou affect much the goods which thou hast, if thou be much troubled about them, setting thy heart and thoughts upon them, and fearing with a vexing and impatient fear to loose them, believe me, thou hast also some kind of feaver ; for they that have feavers drink the water that is given them with a kind of pleasure and greediness, which the healthy have not. It is impossible to take great pleasure in any thing, without setting our affection too much upon it.

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9. If thou suffer losse of goods, and find thy heart disconsolate and afflicted therewith, believe me, Philothea, thou bearest too much affection to them; for nothing so much witnesseth the affection to what we have lost, as affliction for the losse.

10. Desire not then with a full, and expresse desire the wealth which thou hast not; nor settle thy heart too much upon that which thou hast: discomfort not thy self for the losses which befall thee: and then thou shalt have reason to say and believe, that being rich in effect thou art not so in affection, but that rather thou art poor in spirit, and consequently blessed, because the Kingdome of heaven belongs to thee.

### CHAP. XV.

*How to practise true and real Poverty, being notwithstanding really rich.*

1. **T**He painter Parrhasius painted the people of Athens by a most witty invention, representing their diverse and variable dispositions, cholerick, unjust, unconstant, covetous, gentle, merciful, high-minded, proud, humble, hardy and cowardly; and all this together. But I (dear Philothea) would put into thy heart riches and poverty together, a great care and



and a great contempt of temporal things.

2. Take much more care to make thy temporal goods profitable and fruitful, then worldly men do. Tell me, the Gardiners of great Princes, are they not more curious and diligent to deck and trimm up the gardens they have in charge then if they were their own? and why? because doubtlesse they consider those gardens as Kings and Princes gardens, unto whom they desire to make themselves acceptable by those services. Philothea, the possessions which we have are not ours, God hath given them to us to manage, and his will is that we render them profitable and fruitful; and therefore we do him good service to take care of them. But it must be a care greater, and more solid then worldlings have of their riches; for their labours are but for love of themselves, and ours must be for the love of God.

3. Now as self-love is violent, turbulent, and impatient; so the care that we take for it is full of vexation, anguish, and unquietnesse: and as the love of God is sweet, peaceable, and quiet; so the care which proceedeth from it, although it be for worldly goods, is amiable, sweet, and pleasant. Let us then have this gentle care of preserving, yea and of increasing  
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our temporal goods, whensoever any just occasion shall present it self, and as far as our condition requireth it: for God will have us to do so for the love of him.

4. But take heed that self-love deceive thee not, for sometime it counterfeiteth so craftily the love of God, that thou wouldst say it were the same. Now that it deceive thee not, and that this care of thy temporal goods turn not into avarice, besides what I said in the former chapter, we must very often practise a true, real, and effectual poverty, in the midst of all the riches and wealth that God hath given us.

5. Alwaies then relinquish some part of thy goods, bestowing it upon the poor with a willing heart; for to give away that which we have, is to impoverish our selves by so much as we give, and the more we give, the poorer we make our selves. True it is that God will repay it again, not onely in the next world, but even in this; for nothing so much prospereth our temporal estate as almes: but till such time as God shall restore it, we remain so much poorer by that we have given. O how holy, and rich is that poverty which is caused by almes!

6. Love the poor, and poverty, for so shalt thou become truly poor, since as  
saith

saith the Scripture, *we are made like the things which we love*. Love makes lovers equals : *who is weak* (saith S. Paul) *with whom I am not weak* ? he might have said likewise, who is poor with whom I am not poor ? for love made him like to those whom he loved. If then thou love the poor, thou shalt be truly partaker of their poverty, and as poor as they. Now if thou love the poor, be often among them, be glad to see them in thine own house, visite them in theirs, converse willingly with them, rejoyce that they come near thee in the Church, in the street, and elsewhere. Be poor in tongue with them, discourse with them as their companion ; but be rich in hand, giving them liberally of thy goods, as having more abundance.

7. Wilt thou yet go farther, my Philothea, content not thy self to be as poor as the poor, but be poorer then the poor themselves. And how may that be ? The servant is inferiour to his Master : be thou then a servant of the poor, go and serve them in their beds when they are sick ; I say serve them with thine own hands, be their cook thy self, and at thine own expence, be their sempstress, and landresse. O Philothea, this service is more glorious then a Kingdome.

8. I cannot sufficiently admire the ardent affection with which this counsel was put in practise by Saint Lewis, one of the greatest Kings which the Sun hath seen even in all kind of greatnesse. He served often at the table the poor whom he nourished, and caused three poor men almost every day to come to his own, and many times did eat the rest of their portage with an incomparable love. When he visited the hospitals of the sick, (which he did very often) he served those ordinarily which had the most loathsome diseases, leprous, ulcerous, and such like; and performed all this service unto them bare-headed, and kneeling on the ground, respecting in their persons the Saviour of the world, and cherishing them with as tender a love as any careful mother could do her own child.

9. S. Elizabeth, daughter to the King of Hungary, oftentimes put her self amongst the poor, and for her recreation sometimes cloathed her self like a poor woman amongst her Ladies, saying unto them, if I were poor thus would I attire myself. O good God, (Philothea) how poor were this Prince and Princeesse in their riches, and how rich in their poverty! Blessed be they that are poor in this  
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sort, for to them belongeth the Kingdom of heaven. *I was hungry, and you gave me to eat ; I was naked, and you cloathed me ; possesse you the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundation of the world,* will the King of the poor, and of Kings, say at his general Judgement.

10. There is none but upon one occasion or other finds want of some conveniency : Sometimes comes a guest to our house whom we should and would entertain very well, but for the present we are not prepared to receive him ; sometimes our best cloathes are in one place when we want them in another ; it happens another time that all the wine in our cellars work and turn, so that there remains only grosse and green wines ; an other time we come to some poor village where all things are wanting, there is neither bed, chamber, table, nor attendance : In fine, it is very ordinary to want something be we never so rich. Now this is to be poor in effect when we want these things. Philothea, be glad of such occasions, accept them with all thy heart, and suffer them chearfully.

11. When accidents happen which impoverish thee either much or little, as tempest, fire, inundations, dearth, thieves, and suites of law, O then is the time indeed

deed to practise poverty, receiving these losses with mildnesse, and applying our selves patiently, and constantly to this poverty. Esau presented himself to his father with his hands all hairy, and Jacob did the same; but because the hair that covered Jacobs hands stuck not to his skin but to his gloves, one might take away the hair without hurting him; but because the hair of Esaus hands grew upon his own skin, being hairy by nature, he that should have endeavoured to pull off his hair should have put him to great torment, he would have cryed aloud, and been earnest in his defence. When our riches cleave to our hearts, if a tempest, if thieves, if contentious persons pull away any of them from us, what complaints, what troubles, what impatience presently have we! But when our riches are esteemed onely according to the care that God would have us take, and do not cleave to our heart, if they be taken from us, we loose neither senses nor quietnesse. This is the difference betwixt beasts and men, (as to their garments) for the garments of beasts stick fast to their flesh, and those of men are onely cast about them, so that they may be put on and off at their pleasure.



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## CHAP. XVI.

*How to practise richnesse of spirit in  
real poverty.*

1. **B**UT if thou be really poor, Philothea, O God, be so likewise in spirit: make a vertue of necessity, and value this precious jewel of poverty at the high rate it deserveth: the lustre thereof is not discovered in this world, and yet neverthelesse it is exceeding rich and beautiful.

2. Be patient, thou art in good company; our Saviour, our Lady, the Apostles, so many Saints both men and women have been poor, and though they had means to be rich yet they refused to be so. How many rich worldlings with incomparable care and great contradictions have gone to seek holy poverty in cloisters and hospitals? witnesse S. Alexis, Paula, Paulinus, S. Angela, and many others; and behold, Philothea, this holy poverty more favourable to thee, comes to present her self in thine own house, thou hast found her without seeking, without pain; embrace her then as a dear friend of Jesus Christ, who was born, who lived, and died in poverty; she was his nurse all his life.

3. Thy poverty, Philothea, hath two great priviledges, by virtue of which she can make thee rich in merit. The first is,  
that

that she came not to thee by thy own choise, but by the onely will of God, who made thee poore without any concurrence of thy own will : Now that which we receive purely from the will of God, is ever most acceptable to him, provided that we receive it chearfully, and for the love of his holy will; where there is least of our own, there is most of Gods; the simple and pure acceptance of Gods will maketh the purest patience.

4. The second priviledge of this povertie is, that it is a povertie truly poor. Pover-tie that is commended, cherished, esteemed, succoured, and assisted, is not altogether poor; having something of riches in it : but povertie which is despised, rejected, reproached, and abandoned, is truly poor. Such is ordinarily the povertie of secular men; because they are not poor by their own choice, but by necessitie, they are not much esteemed; and in that they are not esteemed, their povertie is poorer then that of religious men; although otherwise the povertie of religious men hath a very great excellencie, and is much more recommendable by reason of the vow and intention for which it is chosen.

5. Complain not then, my dear Philothea, of thy povertie, for we complain not but of that which displeaseth us ;  
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and if povertie displease thee thou art no more poore in spirit, but rich in affection.

6. Be not discomforted then that thou art not so well succoured as is requisite, for in this consisteth the excellencie of povertie. To have a desire to be poor and not to receive the inconvenience of it is too great an ambition, for it is to desire the honour of povertie, and the commoditie of riches.

7. Be not ashamed to be poor, nor to ask alms in charitie. Receive with humilitie that which shall be given thee, and take denials meekly. Remember often the voyage which our Ladie made into Egypt, to carry thither her dear child, and how much contempt, povertie, and miserie she was forced to suffer. If thou live thus, thou shalt be most rich in thy povertie.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Of Friendship; and first of wicked and frivolous friendship.*

1. **L**OVE bath the first place among the passions of the soul: it is the King of all the motions of the heart, it changeth all the other into it self, and maketh us altogether such as is the thing which we love. Take heed then, O Philothea, that thou have no evill love, for with it thou wilt become presently evill. Now of all love  
friendship

friendship is the most dangerous, because other love may be without communication, but friendship being wholly grounded upon that, we can hardly have it with any person without partaking of his qualities.

2. All love is not friendship, for one may love and not be loved, and then is there love but not friendship, because friendship is a mutuall love, and if the love be not mutuall it is not friendship. Neither is it enough that it be mutuall, but the parties that love one another must know their mutuall affection, for if they know it not they may have love but not friendship. There must be also some kind of communication between them, which is the ground of friendship. According to the diversitie of communications, friendship also is divers; and communications are different according to the varietie of matters which they communicate: If they be wicked and vain, the friendship is also false and vain; if they be virtuous, the friendship is true: and the more excellent the matters communicated are, the more excellent is the friendship. For as that honie is best which is gathered from the blossomes of the sweetest, and most excellent flowers: so that love which is founded upon the most exact communication is most excellent. And

as there is honie in Heraclea, a Province in Pontus, which is venomous, and maketh them mad that eat it, because it is gathered from the venomous hearb *Aconitum*, which aboundeth in that countrie, even so friendship grounded upon the communication of wicked and vicious things is altogether false and wicked.

3. The communication of carnall pleasures is a mutuall propension, and brutish incitement, which can no more bear the name of friendship among men, then that of asses and horses for like effects: and if there were no other communication in marriage, there would be no friendship at all; but because besides that there is a communication of life, labour, goods, affections, and of indissoluble loyaltie, therefore is the love of marriage a true and holy friendship. Friendship grounded upon the communication of sensuall pleasures is grosse, and unworthie the name of friendship; so also is that which is founded upon vain and frivolous virtues, which depend onely upon the senses. I call those pleasures sensuall, which principally and immediately are annexed to the exteriour senses, as the beholding of beautie. the hearing of a sweet voice, touching, and the like. I call frivolous virtues certain abilities, and vain qualities, which weak spirits call  
virtues

virtues and perfections. Observe the greater part of maides, women, and young people, they will not stick to say such a gentleman is very virtuous, and hath many perfections, because he danceth well, he playeth well at all games, he dresseth himself well, he singeth well, he discourseth well, he hath a good garbe : And Mountebankes esteem him most virtuous amongst them that playes the fool best.

4. But as all these things depend on the senses, so the friendships which proceed from them are termed sensuall, vain, and frivolous, and deserve rather the name of fondnesse then friendship : such are ordinarily the friendships of young people, which are built upon a fair curled lock of hair, smiling glances, good cloaths, affected countenances, and idle discourse ; friendships sutable to the age of those lovers whose virtue is yet in the blossome, and their judgement in the bud : and indeed such amities are but transitorie, and melt away like snow in the Sun.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### *Of wanton love.*

1. **W**Hen these foolish friendships passe between persons of divers sexes, without pretence of marriage, they are

rightly called fondnesses : for being but certain abortive, or untimely figures, or rather shaddowes of amitie, they deserve not the name of true love, or friendship, by reason of their incomparable vanitie and imperfection. And yet by them are the hearts of men and women engaged, chained, and entangled the one with the other in vain and foolish affections, founded upon these frivolous communications, and fond compleasances, of which but even now I spake.

2. And although these foolish loves do ordinarily melt, and ingulf themselves in carnalitie, and lasciviousnesse ; yet that is not the first design and intention of the persons betwixt whom they passe, for then they would no more be fondnesses, but immodesties & open uncleanness. Some times many years passe ere any thing absolutely contrary to chastitie of body happen between them that are infected with this folly, they onely contenting themselves to entertain their hearts with wishes, desires, sighes, amorous discourse, and such like vanities, and this for sundry pretensions.

3. Some have no other design then only to satiate their hearts in interchanging love, following therein their amorous inclinations ; and these regard nothing in

in the choise of their loves but their own fancies and motions: so that at the first encounter of any pleasing object, without examining the inward condition of it, they begin this fond communication, and engage themselves in these miserable snares, from which afterward with great difficulty they free themselves. Others suffer themselves to be carried into these fondnesses by vanitie, esteeming it no small glory to take and bind hearts by love, and these aiming meerly at glory set their nets, and lay their snares in great, high, and eminent places. Others are led away by their amorous inclination, and by vanity joyntly; for, though their hearts be altogether inclined to love, yet will they not ingage themselves in it without some advantage of glory.

4. These amities are all wicked, because they finish and terminate in the sinne of the flesh, and beguile God, the wife, and the husband of that love, and consequently of that heart which was due to them; foolish, because they have neither foundation, nor reason; vain, because they yield neither profit, honour, nor contentment, but on the contrary they lose time, taint honour, and bring no other pleasure then that of a recklesnesse in pretending and hoping, without knowing what they

would have or pretend : for these poor and mean spirits still believe, that they are encouraged to desire somewhat by the testimonies which are given them of mutuall love, but they cannot tell what it is; so that their desire can never end, but goes on continually vexing their hearts with perpetuall distrusts, jealousies, and distempers.

5. S. Gregory Nazianzen, writing against vain women, tells wonders upon this subject; take here a part thereof, directed indeed to women, yet also not amisse for men. *Thy naturall beautie is sufficient for thy husband; but if it be for many men, like a net spread out for a flock of birds, what will become of it? he will be pleasing to thee, who shall please himself on thy beauty; thou wilt render him glance for glance, look for look; presently will follow smiles, and amorous words, flollen out at the beginning, but soone after they become more familiar, and passe to an open courting. Take heed, O my talking tongue, to tell what will follow: yet will I say this one truth: nothing of all those things which young people say and do together in these foolish compleasances is exempted from great provocations; the whole chain of wanton loves are tincked one with another, as one piece of iron drawn by the loadstone draweth divers other after it.*

6. O how well hath this great Bishop  
spo.

spoken? What doest thou think to do? to give love? No; for none giveth love voluntarily that doth not receive it necessarily. He that catcheth in this chase, is likewise caught himself. The herb *Aproxis* receiveth and conceiveth fire as soon as it seeth it: our hearts do the like; so soon as they see a person inflamed with love for them, they are presently kindled with love for it. But thou wilt say, I will entertain some of this love but not all. Alas, thou deceivest thy self, this fire of love is more active and piercing then thou imaginest; thou makest account to receive but a spark, and thou wilt wonder to see that in a moment it will have possessed thy whole heart, reduced to ashes all thy resolutions, and thy reputation into smoke. The wise-man crieth out; *who will have compassion upon an enchanter, stung by a serpent?* and I also cry after him, O fools and mad men, think you to charm love so as to be able to manage it at your pleasure? you would play with it, but it will bite and sting you cruelly: and know you what will be said of you? every one will mock you, and laugh that you would undertake to enchant love, and upon a false assurance put into your bosome a dangerous serpent, which hath spoiled and lost both your soul and estimation.



7. O God ! what blindnesse is this, to hazard against such frivolous stakes the principall part of our souls ! Yes Philothea, for God regards not man but for his soul, nor the soul but for the will, nor the will but for love. Alas ! we have no love in respect of what we need : I mean, we have nothing near enough wherewith to love God ; and yet, wretches that we are, we lavish it out, and spend it riotously upon vain and frivolous things, as if we had to spare.

8. Ah ! this great God, who hath reserved to himself the onely love of our souls in acknowledgement of our creation, conservation, and redemption, will exact a most strict account of all these foolish deductions we make thereof. If he be to make so rigorous an examination of idle words, what will he do of idle, impertinent, foolish, and peraitious loves ?

9. The walnut tree is very prejudicial to the vines, and fields where it is planted ; because being so great, it draweth away all the substance of the earth, which cannot afterward suffice to nourish the other plants ; the leaves also are so thick that they make a great and close shadow ; and lastly, it allureth the passengers to it, who to beat down the fruit, spoil and trample down all about it. These wanton loves are the same annoyance to the soul ; for they wholly

wholly possesse her, and so strongly draw away her motions that she is not able to produce any good work; the leaves, that is their entertainments, dalliances, and fondnesses are so frequent that all leisure is squandred away in them; and finally, they beget so many temptations, distractions, suspicions, and other ill consequences, that the whole heart is corrupted, and trampled down therewith. To be short, these wanton loves do not onely banish all heavenly love, but also the fear of God, waste the spirit, and weaken the reputation; they are in a word, the pastime of Courts, but the contagion of hearts.

### CHAP. XIX.

#### *Of true Friendship.*

I. **L**OVE every one, Philothea, with a charitable love; but have no friendship but with those that can communicate with thee virtuous things: and the more exquisite the vertues are which shall be interchanged, the more perfect is the friendship. If this communication be in learning the friendship is very commendable, and the more if it be in virtues, in prudence, justice, and discretion. But if your commerce be in charitie, devotion, and Christian perfection, O God, how precious will this friendship be? it will be excellent  
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because it cometh from God, excellent because it tends to God, excellent because its very knot is God, excellent because it shall last eternally in God. O how good is it to love upon earth as they love in heaven; to learn to cherish one another in this world as we shall do eternally in the next!

2. I speak not here of the simple love of charity, for that must be born towards all men, but of spirituall friendship, by which two, or three, or many souls do communicate their devotions, their spirituall affections, and make themselves all but one spirit. Such happie souls may justly sing, *Behold how good a thing it is, and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together:* for the delicious balm of devotion distilleth from one heart to the other by continuall participation; insomuch that it may be sayed, that God hath poured out upon this friendship his blessing and life everlasting. Methinks all other friendships are but shadows in respect of this; their bonds are but chains of glasse or jeat, in comparison of this great bond of holy devotion which is all of gold.

3. Make no other kind of friendship then this: I speak of such friendships as are made; for thou must not forsake or neglect the friendships which nature, or  
former

former duties oblige thee to preserve towards thy parents, kindred, benefactors, neighbours, and others: I speak of those which thou dost chuse thy self.

4. Many peradventure will say that we should have no kind of particular friendship or affection, because it distracteth the mind, possesseth the heart, and begets envie; but they are deceived in their advise: for because they have seen in the writings of many devout authours, that particular friendships, and excessive affections infinitely prejudice religious persons, they imagine therefore that it is so with the rest of the world; but there is great difference: for since that in a well ordered monastery the common design of all tends to true devotion, it is not requisite to make these particular communications there, least seeking in particular that which is common, they fall from particularities to partialities. But for those which live in the world, and embrace true virtue, it is necessary to unite themselves together by a holy friendship; for by means thereof they encourage, help, and lead on one another to goodnesse. And as they that go upon plain ground need not to be led by the hand; but they who go in rugged and slippery wayes hold one by the other to walk more securely: so they that  
are

are in religion have no need of particular friendships, but they who are in the world have need of them, to succour and secure one another amongst so many dangerous passages which they are to passe. In the world, all conspire not to the same end, all are not of one mind; we must then doubtlesse separate our selves, and make friendships according to our pretensions. This particularity maketh indeed a partiality, but a holy partiality which maketh no division, but onely betwixt good and evil, sheep and goats, bees and drones; a separation most necessary.

5. No man can deny but our B. Saviour loved with a more tender and particular friendship S. John, Lazarus, Martha, and M. Magdalene, for the Scripture testifieth it. We know that S. Peter tenderly loved S. Mark, and Petronella, and S. Paul his Timothee, and S. Tecla. S. Gregory Nazianzen boasted an hundred times of the incomparable friendship which he had with great S. Basil, and describeth it in this manner: *It seemed that in the one and the other of us there was but one soul dwelling in two bodies: and if those be not to be credited who said, that all things are in all things; yet must we believe that we were both in each one of us, and one within the other: we had both of us the same*

*same pretension to advance virtue, and to apply all the designes of our life to future hopes; going in this manner out of this mortall world, before we died in it.*

6. Saint Augustine testifieth that Saint Ambrose loved S. Monica intirely, for the rare virtues which he observed in her, and that she reciprocally respected him as an Angel of God. But I am to blame to hold thee so long in a matter so clear. Saint Hierome, S. Augustine, S. Gregory, S. Bernard, and all the greatest servants of God had most particular amities, without any prejudice to their perfection. Saint Paul reprocheth the ill behaviour of the Gentils, accusing them that they were people without affection, that is to say, who had no true friendship. And S. Thomas, with all other good Philosophers confesse, that friendship is a virtue: and he speaketh of particular friendship, since, as he saith, perfect friendship cannot be extended to many persons. Perfection then consisteth not in having no friendship, but in having none but such as are good, virtuous, and holy.

## CHAP. XX.

*The difference betwixt true and vain  
friendship.*

1. **B**ut observe now this principall admonition, Philothea : The honey of He-  
 raclea which is so venomous , is like the o-  
 ther which is wholsome; there is great dan-  
 ger in taking the one for the other , or in  
 mingling them both together, for the good-  
 nesse of the one would not hinder the poi-  
 son of the other. He must stand upon his  
 guard that will not be deceived in these  
 friendships, principally when they are con-  
 tracted betwixt persons of divers sexes un-  
 der what pretence soever ; for the diuel of-  
 tentimes brings a change to those that love:  
 they begin in virtuous love, but if they be  
 not very discreet, fond love will first min-  
 gle it self, then sensuall, and afterward  
 carnall love. Yea there is danger in spiri-  
 tuall love if we be not very watchfull;  
 though in this it be more difficult to make  
 a change, because the purity and candour of  
 this love renders more apparent the spots  
 which the devil endeavoureth to mingle  
 with it : and therefore when he undermin-  
 keth this he doth it more craftily, and en-  
 deavours to slip in impurities almost in-  
 sensibly.

2. Thou mayst discern worldly friend-  
 ship

ship from that which is holy and virtuous, as the Heracleean honey is known from the other. The honey of Heraclea is sweeter to the taste than the ordinary honey, because of the juice of Aconite which giveth it an addition of sweetness: so worldly amity produceth ordinarily a confused rabble of honied words, passionate extasies, and admirations of beauty, behaviour, and other sensuall qualities; but holy friendship speaketh simply, and freely, and can commend nothing but the power and grace of God, the onely foundation upon which it subsists.

3. The honey of Heraclea being swallowed down causeth a dizziness in the head: and false friendship breedeth a giddiness in the mind, which causeth staggering in chastity and devotion, a wandring to affected, wanton, and immodest looks, to sensuall embraces, inordinate sighs, foolish complaints for want of love, attractive, and enticing simpers, galantries, interchanging of kisses, and other familiarities and incivill kindneses, which are certain signs of the approaching ruine of honesty. But holy friendship hath no eyes but sincere and chaste, no embraces but pure and modest, no sighs but for heaven, no familiarities but spirituall, no complaints but when God is not loved;  
in-



infallible tokens of virtue. The honey of Heraclea troubleth the sight : and this worldly friendship corrupts the judgements ; so that they which are infected therewith think they do well when they do ill , and believe their excuses and pretexts to be true reasons : they fear the light and love darknesse. But holy friendship hath a clear sight, and never hideth her self , but appeareth willingly before honest persons. In fine, the honey of Heraclea leaveth a bitterness in the mouth : so false friendships change , and terminate in carnall words, and impure demands, or in case of refusall in injuries, slanders, deceits, melancholy confusions, and jealousies, which often end in brutishnesse , and madnesse. But chaste friendship is alwayes equally honest, civil, amiable, and never changeth, but into a more perfect and pure union of spirits : a lively image of the blessed friendship practised in heaven.

4. S. Gregorie Nazianzen saith, that the cry of the Peacock, when he brusteeth up his tail, provoketh the pea-hens to lust: when we see a man like a Peacock deck and trim up himself , and so come to talk and whisper in the ears of a woman, without pretence of just marriage , doubtlesse it is but to provoke her to some immodesty ; and a woman of honour will stop her

her eares, that she may not hear the cry of this Peacock, nor the voice of this in-chaunter who would subtilly charm her ; but if she hearken to him, O God ! what an ill presage of the future losse of her heart !

5. Young people who use glances, signs, and courtings, or speak words which they would not have heard by their fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, or confessours, sufficiently witnesse thereby that they treat of some other thing then honour and conscience. Our Blessed Lady was troubled when she saw an Angel in shape of a man, because she was alone, and that he gave her extraordinary though heavenly praises. O Saviour of the world ! purity feareth an Angel in the shape of a man, and why should not impurity fear a man though he come in the shape of an Angel, when he praiseth her with humane and sensual commendations ?

## CHAP. XXI.

*Advises and remedies against evill  
friendship.*

1. **B**ut what remedy against this brood and nursery of foolish loves, fond and wanton impurities ? as soon as thou shalt feel the first touch of them, turn away, and with an absolute detestation of this  
vanity

vanity run to the Crosse of our Saviour, and taking his crown of thornes put it about thy heart, to the end these little foxes come not nearer. Take heed of coming to any kind of composition with this enemy: say not, I will hear him but will do nothing of that he shall say, I will lend him mine cares but deny him my heart: O no Philothea, for Gods sake be rigorous in these occasions. The heart and the ear correspond one with another; and as it is impossible to stop a torrent that taketh its descent from a steep mountain; so it is hard to hinder the love which entreth in at the ear, from falling suddenly into the heart.

2. Alcmæon said that goats breath by the ears, and not by the nostrils: true it is that Aristotle denyeth it, and I know not how it is, yet this I know, that our heart breaths by the ear; and as it sends forth its own thoughts by the tongue, so it drawes in the thoughts of others by the ear. Let us then keep our ears diligently from drawing in the breath of foolish words, otherwise our heart will soon be infected. Hearken to no kind of proposition under what pretext soever; in this case alone there is no danger in being harsh and uncivil.

3. Remember that thou hast vowed thy heart

heart to God, and sacrificed thy love to him, it would then be a sacrilege to beguile him of one dramme of it ; rather sacrifice it to him again by a thousand resolutions and protestations : and keeping thy self close in them, as a deer within his thicket, call upon God, and he will help thee, and his love will take thine into protection, that it may live for him alone.

4. But if thou be already insnared in the nets of these foolish loves, O God ! how difficult will it be to get out ! Present thy self before the Divine Majestie, acknowledge in his presence the greatnesse of thy misery, frailty, and vanity. Then with the greatest resolution that thy heart is able to make, detest the loves which thou hast begun, abjure the vain profession which thou hast made of them, renounce all the promises received, and with a most firm and absolute resolution determine in thy heart, and resolve never more to enter into these pastimes and entertainments of love.

5. If thou couldest withdraw thy self from the object, I should infinitely approve it : for as they that have been stung by serpents cannot easily be cured in the presence of them which have been stung before ; so the person stung with love will be hardly cured of this passion being

being near the other who is hurt with the same sting. Change of place serves very much to moderate the heat and vexation either of grief or love. The youth of whom S. Ambrose speaketh in his second book of penance, having made a long voyage, returned home altogether freed from those foolish loves which he had formerly, and became so changed, that his foolish Mistress meeting him, and saying, dost thou not know me? I am the same that I was: yes, answered he, but I am not the same that I was: Absence had brought him to this fortunate change. And S. Augustine witnesseth, that to mitigate the grief which he suffered for the death of his friend, he withdrew himself from Tagasta, and went to Carthage.

6. But he that cannot withdraw himself, what must he do? he must absolutely refrain all particular conversation, all secret familiarity, all loving looks or smiles, and generally all sorts of communications and allurements which may nourish this stinking and smoky fire: or at most, if he be forced to speak with the other party, let him with a bold, brief, and resolute protestation declare the eternal divorce that he hath sworn. I, cry aloud to every one that is fallen into these miserable snares of

wanton

wanton love, cut, break, and tear them, stand not dallying to ripp these foolish amities, they must be torn; untye not the knots, but break, and cut them, that the cords and strings may be nothing worth: we must not be favourable to a love which is so contrary to the love of God.

7. But when I shall so have broken the chain of this infamous bondage, there will yet remain some remembrances, some marks and prints of the irons still stay in my feet, that is, in my affections. No, no, Philothea, they will not, if thou halt conceived as great a detestation of thy sin as it deserveth; for so thou shalt never be moved with any motion, but that of an extreme horror of this infamous love, and of all that depends upon it; and thou shalt remain free from all other affection towards the forsaken object, saving that of pure charity for the love of God. But if for the imperfection of thy repentance, there shall yet remain in thee any perverse inclinations, procure for thy soul a spiritual retreat, as before I have taught thee, and retire thy self thither as often as thou canst, and by a thousand reiterated resolutions of spirit renounce all thy inclinations, reject them with all thy forces, read holy books more then ordinary,

dinary, go to confession, and communicate more frequently, discourse humbly and plainly of all the suggestions and temptations which befall thee in this case with thy director, if thou canst, or at least with some faithful and prudent person: And doubt not but God will set thee free from all passions, so that thou persevere faithfully in these good exercises.

8. Ah! (wilt thou say) but will it not be ingratitude to break so incompassionately old friendship? O blessed ingratitude which maketh us acceptable to God! Nay I tell thee in the name of God, Philothea, this will be no ingratitude, but an infinite benefit which thou shalt do to the other party: for in breaking thine own bonds thou shalt also break the others, since that they were common to you both; and though for the present the other party seeth not the happiness, yet he will acknowledge it soon after, and joyntly sing with thee in thankfulness; *O Lord thou hast broken my bonds, I will sacrifice to thee a sacrifice of praise, and will call upon thy holy name.*

## CHAP. XXII.

*Other advises upon the subject of amities.*

I. Friendship requireth great communication

ation between friends, otherwise it will neither grow nor continue. Wherefore it often happeneth, that with this communication of friendship other communications do insensibly glide from one heart to another, by a mutuell infusion and intercourse of affections, inclinations, and impressions. But this happeneth especially when we highly esteem him whom we love, for then we open our heart in such sort to his friendship, that with it his inclinations and impressions easily enter in full stream, be they good or bad. Certainly the Bees that gather the honie of Heraclea seek nothing but honie, yet with the honie they insensibly suck the venomous qualitie of the Aconite from which they gather it. Well then Philothea, in this case thou must practice the words which the Saviour of our souls was wont to speak, as the ancients have taught us: be good treasurers, or exchangers of mony; that is to say, receive not false mony with the good, nor base gold with fine, separate the drossie from the precious, for there is scarce any but hath some imperfection; and what reason is there to receive promiscuously the spots and imperfections of a friend with his friendship? we must love him indeed, notwithstanding his imperfection, but we must neither love, nor receive his imperfection, for

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friendship requireth communication of good and not of evill. Wherefore as they that draw gravell out of the river Tago, separate the gold which they find to carrie it away, and leave the sand upon the shore: so they who have the communication of some good friendship, ought to separate from it the sand of imperfections, and not permit it to enter into the soul. S. Greg. Nazianzen witnesseth, that many loving and admiring S. Basil, were ambitious to imitate him even in his outward imperfections, as in speaking slow, distractedly, and pensively, in the fashion of his beard, and in his gate. And we see likewise husbands, wives, children, and friends, who having great estimation of their friends, parents, husbands, and wives, get either by compliance or by imitation a thousand little ill humours in their communication of friendship which they have one with another. Now this ought not to be done in any sort, for every one hath evill inclinations enough of his own, without charging himself with those of others; and friendship doth not onely not require that, but contrariwise obligeth us to help to free one another mutually from all kind of imperfections. We must indeed meekly suffer our friends in their imperfections, but we must not bring them into imperfections,  
much

much lesse transport their imperfections into our selves. But I speak onely of imperfections, for as for sins we must neither cause nor suffer them in our friends.

2. It is either a weak or false friendship to see our friend perish and not to help him, to see him die of an impostume and not to dare to launce it with the rasour of correction to save his life : true and lively amitie cannot subsist where is sin. They say the Salamander putteth out the fire, in which she lieth : and so doth sin destroy that friendship wherein it lodgeth. If it be a light passing sin, friendship will presently banish it by correction ; but if it be a lasting sin, then friendship soon perisheth, for it cannot subsist but upon true virtue : how much lesse then ought we to sin for friendships sake ? A friend is an enemy when he would induce us to sin, and he merits to lose the friendship when he would destroy the friend. Nay, it is one of the most assured marks of false friendship, to see it practised towards a vicious person, in what sort of sinne soever it be. If he whom we love be vicious, without doubt our friendship is vicious ; for where it cannot meet with true virtue, it must needs be grounded upon some frivolous virtue or sensualitie. Societie made for temporall profit among Merchants, hath but a

shadow of true friendship, for it is not made for the love of the persons but for the love of gain.

3. Finally, these two divine sentences are two sure pillars to secure a Christian life : The one of the wise-man ; *He that feareth God shall likewise have a good friendship* : The other of the Apostle S. James ; *The friendship of this world is contrary to God.*

### CHAP. XXIII.

*Of the exercise of exterior mortification.*

1. **T**HEY who treat of husbandry and countrie affairs tell us, that if one write any word upon a verie sound Almond, and put it again into the shel, shutting it up very close and so planting it, all the fruit which that tree produceth will have the same word written and graven upon it. For my part, Philothea, I could never approve of their order and method, who to reform a man begin with the exterior, as their gestures, apparell, and hair. On the contrary, I think it better to begin with the interior : *Be converted unto me* (saith God) *with all your heart: Son, give me thy heart.* For the heart being the fountain of our actions, they must needs be such as is the heart. The divine spouse inviting the soul, *Place me* (saith he) *upon thy heart, as a signet*

*fignet upon thy arme* : for whosoever hath Jesus Christ in his heart, will quickly have him in all his exterior actions. For this cause ( dear Philothea ) I have desired above all things to ingrave and write in thy heart this sacred word, *Live Jesus*; assuring my self, that after that thy life, which hath its beginning from the heart, as an Almond tree from its kernell, will bring forth all her actions ( which are her fruits ) ingraven and superscribed with that same word of salvation. And as this sweet Jesus will live in thy heart, so will he also live in all thy conversation, and will appear in thine eyes, in thy mouth, in thy hands, and even in thy haire; and thou wilt be then able to say with S. Paul, *I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me*. Briefly, he that hath gained the heart of a man hath gained the whole man. But even this heart by which we would begin, requireth to be instructed how it should frame its outward course and conversation, to the end men may not onely see holy devotion there, but great wisdom also, and discretion : For this I will briefly give thee some advices.

2. If thou art able to indure fasting, thou shalt do well to fast some dayes beside those which the holy Church injoyneth; for besides the ordinary effects of fasting,

which are to elevate the spirit, subdue the flesh, practice virtue, and gain greater recompence in heaven, it is a soveraign benefit to keep thy self in an abilitie to master gluttonie, and to subject the sensuall appetite, and the body to the law of the spirit. And although we fast not much, yet the enemy seareth us more when he knows we know how to fast. Wednesdaies, Fridayes, and Saturdayes are the dayes in which the ancient Christians exercised most abstinence: take some of them therefore to fast in, as much as thy devotion, and the discretion of thy Ghostly directour shall advise thee.

3. I would willingly say as S. Hierome said to the devout Ladie Lata, *Long and immoderate fastings do much displeaseme, especially in those that are yet tender in yeares.* I have learned by experience, that the little asse being weary in his journey, seeketh to go out of the way; that is to say, young people being brought to infirmitie through excesse of fasting, are easily perswaded to tenderresse. The Deere run ill in two seasons, when they are too fat, and when they are too lean. We are most subject to temptations when our body is too much pampered, and when it is too much weakned; for the one makes it insolent with ease, & the other desperate with affliction:

And

And as we cannot bear it when it is too fat, so can it not bear us when it is too lean. The want of this moderation in fasting, in disciplining, in hair-clothes, and other austerities, make the best years of many unprofitable in the service of charity, (as it did even in S. Bernard, who repented that he had used overmuch austerity) who the more unreasonably they have afflicted their bodies in their beginning, the more have they been constrained in the end to favour them. Had they not done better to have mortified their bodies moderately, and proportionably to the offices and labours whereunto their condition obliged them?

4. Fasting and labour mortifie and subdue the flesh: but if the labour which thou shalt do be necessarie, or very profitable to the glory of God, I had rather thou wouldst suffer the pain of labour then that of fasting. This is the sense of the holy Church, which, for labours that are profitable to the service of God and our neighbour, dischargeth such labourers even from the fasts commanded. It is a pain to some to fast, to others to serve the sick, to visit prisoners, to hear confessions, to assist the afflicted, to preach, pray, and perform such like exercises: these latter pains are better then the former, for be-

sides that they equally subdue the body, they produce fruits much more profitable. And therefore generally it is better to preserve the bodily forces more then is requisite, then to weaken them too much; for we may alwaies abate them when we will, but we cannot alwaies repair them when we would.

5. Methinks we should greatly reverence the words which our blessed Saviour saith to his disciples; *Eat that which shall be set before you.* It is (in my opinion) a greater virtue to eat without choice that which is set before thee, then to chuse alwayes the worst; for although this latter course of life seem more austere, the other notwithstanding hath greater resignation; for thereby we renounce not onely our own taste, but also our own choice, and it is not a small severitie to conform our taste to every meat, and to keep it in subjection to all incounters. Besides, this kind of mortification makes no shew, nor troubleth any man, and is onely proper for a civil life. To put by one meat and take another, to taste and lick of every dish, to think nothing well dressed, to use ceremonies at every bit, betokens a heart too effeminate, and too much addicted to dishes and platters. I esteem more S. Bernards drinking oil instead of water and wine, then  
if

if he had drunk wormwood of purpose; for it was a plain signe that he thought not upon that which he drank: and in this carelesnesse of that which we eat or drink consisteth the perfect practise of this sacred rule, *Eat that which shall be set before you.* I except notwithstanding such meats as prejudice our health, or trouble the spirit, as hot, spiced, fuming, and windy meats; and likewise certain occasions, in which nature hath need to be recreated and strengthened to support some labour for Gods glorie. A continuall and moderate sobrietie is better then violent abstinences made by fits, and mingled with many intermissions.

6. Disciplining hath a marvellous efficacy to stirre up a desire of devotion in us, when it is moderately used. The hair-shirt mortifieth the flesh very much, but the ordinary use thereof is neither for married persons, nor tender complexions, nor for such as are employed in painfull labours. It is true that upon some principall dayes of penance it may be used with advise of a discreet Confessour.

7. We must take the night to sleep in, every one as much as his constitution requires to enable him to wake in the day time, and to spend it profitably. And because the holy Scripture in a hundred kinds gives



us the examples of the Saints, and natural reasons do seriously recommend the morning to us as the best and most fruitfull part of the day, and that our Saviour himself is named the sunne-rising, and our B. Ladie the dawning of the day; I think it is a virtuous care to go to rest betimes at night, that we may wake and rise early in the morning; for certainly that time is the most quiet, and least perplexed. The very birds do then invite us to wake and praise God: so that early rising advantages both our health and pietie.

8. Balaam mounted on his asse went to find Balaac, but because he had no good intention, the Angel waited for him in the way with a sword in his hand to kill him: The asse that saw the Angel, stood still three sundrie times as restie; Balaam in the mean time beat her cruelly with his staff to make her go forward; untill the fillie beast, the third time falling flat down under Balaam, miraculously spake to him, saying, *what have I done to thee, for which thou hast beaten me now three several times?* and by and by Balaams eyes were opened, and he saw the Angel, which said to him; *wherefore didst thou beat thy asse? if she had not turned back from before me, I had killed thee, and saved her:* Then Balaam said to the Angel, Lord, *I have sinned, for*

*I knew not that thou hadst placed thy self in the way against me. Seest thou Philothea? Balaam is the cause of the evil, and he striketh and beateth his poor asse that could nor do otherwise. It is just so with us; for this woman seeth her husband or her child sick, and presently she runnes to fasting, to hair-cloth, and to disciplining, as David did in the like case. Alas! my dear friend, thou beatest the poor asse, thou afflicteth thy bodie, but it cannot help thy affliction, nor divert Gods sword drawn against thee. Correct thy heart, which is an idolater of this husband, and suffereth a thousand vices in this child, and destineth it to pride, vanitie, and ambition. This man perceiveth himself to fall foully into the sinne of Luxurie; inward remorse cometh against his conscience with a sword in his hand to pierce it with a holy fear; and presently his heart coming to it self, saith, *Ab! cursed flesh, ah! treacherous body, thou hast betrayed me*: and presently he takes revenge upon his flesh with immoderate fasting, excessive disciplining, insupportable hair-cloaths. O poor soul, if thy flesh could speak as Balaams asse did, she would say to thee, *wherefore miserable man dost thou strike me?* it is against thy self (O my soul) that God armeth his vengeance, it is*

is thou that art guilty ; wherefore doest thou lead me to wicked conversations? why doest thou employ mine eyes, my lips, and my hands in lasciviousnesse ? wherefore doest thou busie me with vain and wanton imaginations ? have thou good thoughts and I shall have no evil motions, frequent thou chaste persons and I shall not be provoked to lust. Alas! it is thou that throwest me into the fire, and yet thou wouldest not have me burn ; thou puttest smoke into mine eyes, and forbiddest them to be distempered. And God doubtlesse in these occasions saith, beat, break, tear, and shiver your hearts principally, for it is against them that my anger is stirred up. Certainly, to cure the itch it is not so needfull to wash or bathe the bodie, as to purifie the bloud, and refresh the liver: so to cure us of our vices it is good indeed to mortifie the flesh, but it is more necessary perfectly to purifie our affections, and refresh our hearts. But in and above all, let us be sure never to undertake corporall austerities but with advise of our spirituall guide.

#### CHAP. XXIV.

##### *Of Company and Solitarinesse.*

1. **T**O seek company, and flie it, are two extreames to be blamed in the devotion of  
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men of the world, which is that whereof I discourse: to shun all companies favour-eth of disdain and contempt of our neighbour, and to seek after them is a sign of idlenesse. We must love our neighbour as our selves, and to shew that we love him, we must not avoid his company: and to testifie that we love our selves, we must take pleasure with our selves when we are in our selves; and we are in our selves when we are alone. *Think first of thy self,* (saith S. Bernard) *and then of others.* If then no occasion presse thee to go abroad into company, or to receive company at home, stay in thy self, and converse with thine own heart: but if company come to thee, or any just cause invite thee to company, go in Gods name, Philothea, & see thy neighbour with a chearful heart, & a pleasing ey.

2. We call that evil company which is assembled to some evil intent, or when it is composed of indiscreet, and dissolute persons; and such we must avoid, as the bees use to shun a swarm of wasps or drones. For as they that are bitten by mad dogs have their sweat, breath, and spittle infectious, especially for children, and those of a tender complexion: so vitious and lewd persons cannot be frequented but with hazard, and danger, and especially by those whose devotion is yet but young and tender.

3. There

3. There are some conversations profitable for nothing but onely recreation, which are made meerly to divert us from serious affairs: for such, though we must not be too much addicted to them, yet we may spare them the leasure set apart for recreation. Other conversations have civility for their end; as mutuall visits, and certain meetings made to do honour to our neighbour: touching these, we ought neither to be superstitious in practising them, nor uncivill in contemning them; but modestly comply with our duties therein, to the end we may equally avoid both incivility and vanity.

4. There remain now the profitable conversations; such are those of devout and virtuous persons. O Philothea, it will be good for thee to be often in these. The vine planted amongst the olive trees beareth onely grapes which tast of the olives: and the soul which frequents virtuous people cannot but partake of their qualities. Drones alone cannot make honey, but by the help of the bees they make it: we are much advantaged in the exercise of devotion by conversing with devout persons.

5. In all conversations sincerity, simplicity, mildnesse, and modesty are still to be preferred. There are some that make no gesture or motion but with so much affectation

Station that they offend the company: and as he that would never walk but telling his steps, nor speak but singing, would be troublesome to other men; so they who affect an artificiall carriage, and do nothing but in measure, are importunate to the company, and in these there is ever some kind of presumption. Let a moderate mirth ordinarily predominate in our conversation. S. Romuald and S. Anthony are highly commended, that notwithstanding all their austerities, they had alwayes mirth, chearfulnesse, and civility in their countenances and discourse. *Rejoyce with them that rejoyce.* I say once again with the Apostle; *Rejoyce alwayes*; (but in our Saviour) *Let your modesty appear to all men.* To rejoyce in our Saviour, it is needfull the cause of thy joy be not onely lawfull but also decent; and this I say, because there are some things lawfull which yet are not decent: and to the end that thy modesty may appear, keep thy self from all insolency, which is alwayes reprehensible. To give one a fall, to black anothers face, to prick or pinch a third, to hurt a mad-man are foolish and insolent merryments.

6. But ever besides mentall solitude whereto thou mayest withdraw thy self even amidst the greatest conversations, (as I have already declared) thou must love to be really

really and locally solitary : nor to go to the desert or wilderness, as S. Mary of Egypt, S. Paul, S. Anthony, Arsenius, and the other fathers of the desert ; but to be sometimes in thy garden, or in thy chamber, or some other place where thou mayest with most contentment retire thy spirit into thy heart, and recreate thy soul with good thoughts and holy meditations, or by some good reading, according to the example of the great Nazianzen Bishop, who speaking of himself saith ; *I walked, my self with my self about sun setting, and passed the time upon the sea shore ; for I was wont to use this recreation to refresh my self, and to shake off a little my ordinary troubles :* and thereupon he discourseth of the good meditation which I mentioned in another place : And according to the example of Saint Ambrose, of whom Saint Augustine saith, that he entring oft-times into his chamber ( for entrance was denyed to no man ) saw him reading, and having stayed a while, for fear of troubling him he went away without speaking a word, thinking that the little time that remained to this great Pastour for re-inforcing and recreating his spirit after the toils of so many businesses, ought not to be taken from him. So after the Apostles one day had told our Lord how they had preached and laboured ;

boured : *Come* (saith he) *into the desert,*  
*and repose your selves a while.*

## CHAP. XXV.

### *Of Decency in Attire.*

1. S. Paul admonisheth devout women (and the same must be understood of men) to be attired in decent apparell, adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety. Now the decency of apparell and other ornaments depends upon their stuff, fashion, and cleanness. Touching cleanness, it should be almost alwayes alike in our apparell, upon which, as near as may be, we should not permit any kind of spots or foulness. Exteriour neatness representeth in some sort the inward, and God himself requireth corporall decency in those that approach near his Altar, and have the principall charge of devotion.

2. As for the stuff and fashion of clothes, decency is to be considered according to the divers circumstances of time, age, quality, company and occasions. Men apparell themselves ordinarily better upon festivall dayes, according to the solemnity of the feast which is celebrated : In time of penance, as in Lent, rich clothes are laid aside; at weddings they put on wedding garments; at burials mourning; at Court men are better clad then at home. The married  
 woman



woman may and ought to adorn her self, when her husband is present and desireth it; but if she do so in his absence, she will be asked whose eyes she desires to favour with that particular respect? We give more liberty of dressing to young maids, because they may lawfully desire to please many, although with no other intent then to gain one by holy marriage. Neither is it esteemed amisse that widows, who pretend marriage, dresse themselves decently, so they shew no lightnesse: for having already been mothers of families, and passed through the griefs of widowhood, they are held to be of a more ripe and settled judgement. But as for those which are true widows, not onely in body but in heart, no ornament becometh them but humility, modesty, and devotion: for if they desire to make men in love with them they are not true widows, and if they desire it not why do they use the instruments? He that will not receive guests must pull down the sign from his house. Old people are alwayes ridiculous when they make themselves gay, those follies are not tolerable but in youth.

3. Be neat Philothea, let nothing be about thee loose or ill put on: it is a neglect of them with whom we converse to come into their company in uncomely apparell.

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But take heed withall of affectation, curiosities, effeminacies, and vanities. As far as thou art able, keep thy self alwaies in simplicity and modesty; for without doubt it is the greatest ornament of beauty, and the best excuse for deformity.

4. S. Peter admonished young women especially not to wear their hair so curled and crisped in rings and wreathes; but men who are so effeminate as to affect such vanities are justly derided for Hermaphrodites. And even women carried away with these vanities are counted but weak in chastity; at least if they have any it appears not among so many toys and levities. They say they intend no ill in these things: but I reply, (as I have elsewhere said) that yet the diuel doth. I would have devout people apparelled best of all the company; but yet with the least pomp and affectation: and (as it is said in the Proverb) I would have them adorned with gravity, decency, and honour. S. Lewis saith in one word, that each one should be apparelled according to his calling; so that good and grave men might not say, thou doest too much, nor young persons say, thou doest too little: but if young people will not content themselves with decency, they must submit to the judgment of the wise.

## CHAP. XXVI.

*Of Discourse. And first how to speak of God.*

1. **P**Hysicians make a great judgement of the health or sicknesse of a man by looking upon his tongue: so our words are certain signes of the quality of our soules. *By thy words* (saith our Saviour) *thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* We lay our hand alwaies upon the pain we feel, and employ our tongue in discoursing of that which we love.

2. If then, Philothea, thou love God, thou wilt often speak of him in thy familiar discourses with thy neighbours, with thy friends, and with thy household servants: *For the mouth of the just will meditate wisdom, and his tongue will speak judgement.* As Bees manage nothing with their little mouths but honey: so shall thy tongue be alwaies sweetened with God, and shall find no greater pleasure then to send through thy lips the praises and blessings of his name; for so they say S. Francis was wont to suck and lick his lips after he had pronounced the holy name of God, drawing from thence the greatest sweetnesse in the world.

3. But speak alwaies of God as of God,

God, that is reverently, and devoutly ; not with a purpose to seem learned or sufficient, but with a spirit of mildnesse, charity, and humility ; distilling as much as thou maiest (as it is said of the spouse in the Canticles) the delicious honey of devotion and holy things, drop by drop, into the eares sometimes of one sometimes of another ; praying to God in the secret of thy heart , that it would please him to make this heavenly dew passe into the heart of those that hear thee.

4. Above all things perform this Angelical office mildly and sweetly, not by way of correction, but of inspiration. For it is wonderful how powerfully a sweet and gentle manner of proposing good things worketh upon the hearts of the hearers.

5. Never therefore speak of God and of devotion by way of discourse and entertainment, but with attention and reverence : which I say to make thee beware of a notable vanity that is found in many who make profession of devotion ; they will upon every occasion utter holy and zealous discourses by way of complement, without considering what they do ; and after they have spoken them, they imagine themselves to be such as their words declare them, which indeed they are not.

## CHAP. XXVII.

*Of civility in talk, and due respect of persons.*

1. **I**F any one sin not in word (saith Saint James) *he is a perfect man.* Beware thou utter not any unseemly word: for although it proceed not from thee with an ill intention, yet they that hear it may interpret it otherwise. An evill word falling into a weak heart, spreadeth it self like a dropp of oyl falling upon a piece of linnen; and sometimes it so seiseth upon the heart, that it filleth it with a thousand unclean thoughts and immodest temptations. For as the poison of the body entreth by the mouth: so the poison of the heart entreth by the ear; and the tongue which uttereth it is a murtherer. For although peradventure the poison which it hath cast forth hath not wrought its effect, because it found the hearts of the hearers prevented with some preservative; yet there wanted no malice in the tongue to commit the murther. And let no man say that he thought no evil, for our Lord, who knoweth all thoughts, hath said, *that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:* and though we think no evil yet the divel thinketh enough, and oft-times secretly makes use of these wicked words

words to wound some heart. They say, such as have eaten the herb *Angelica* have alwaies a sweet and pleasant breath : and they that have honesty and chastity (which is an angelical virtue) in their hearts, have their words alwaies pure, civil, and chaste. As for indecencies and scurrilities, the Apostle will not once have them named amongst us, assuring us, *that nothing so much corrupteth good manners as wicked discourse.*

2. If uncivil words be uttered obscurely with wit and subtilty, then are they far more venomous. For as a dart, the sharper it is, the more easily it entreth into the body ; so the more sharp a wicked word is, the more it pierceth the heart. And they that esteem themselves gallant men for speaking such words in company, know not indeed wherefore conversation is ordained : for they should be like swarms of bees, gathered together to make honey of some pleasant and vertuous entertainment ; and not like a nest of waspes who come together to suck corruption. If some fool speak immodest words to thee, make him know that thine ears are offended with it, either by turning thy self away, or by some other means, as thy discretion shall guide thee.

3. It is one of the worst conditions that

a wit can have to be a mocker : God extremely hateth this vice, and hath heretofore made strange punishments thereof. Nothing is so contrary to charity ( and much more to devotion ) as the despising and contemning of our neighbour : now derision and mockery is never without this contempt, and therefore it is a very great sin ; so that the Doctours have reason to say , that mockery is the greatest offence that man can commit against his neighbour by words ; for other offences are committed alwaies with esteem of him that is offended , but this is done with scorn and contempt.

4. As for jesting words , which are spoken by one to another with modest and innocent mirth, they belong to the virtue called *Eutrapelia* by the Greeks , which we may call *good conversation* , by which we take an honest and pleasant recreation, upon such frivolous occasions as humane imperfections do offer : onely we must take heed of passing from this honest mirth to scoffing ; for mocking causeth laughter in scorn and contempt of our neighbour ; but mirth and drollery provoke laughter , by an innocent liberty, confidence, and familiar freedome, joyned to the witnesse of some conceit.

5. S. Lewis , when religious persons would

would speak with him after meales of great and weightie matters, *It is not now a time to alledge Texts, ( would he say ) but to recreate our spirits with mirth and pleasant conceits : let every man say decently what he will.* This he said in favour of the Nobility that were then about him to receive favour from his Majestie. But let us so passe our time, Philothea, in recreation, that we take care to preserve holy Eternitie by devotion.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

### *Of rash Judgement.*

1. *Judge not, and you shall not be judged; (saith the Saviour of our souls) condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. No, (saith the holy Apostle) judge not before the time, untill our Lord do come, who will reveal the secrets of darknesse, and lay open the counsels of hearts.* O how displeasing are rash judgements to God! The judgements of the children of men are rash, because they are not judges one of another, so that in judging they usurp to themselves the office of our Lord. They are rash, because the principall malice of sin dependeth upon the intention and counsell of the heart, which is a secret of darknesse to us. They are rash, because every one hath enough to do to judge himself,

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without



without presuming to judge his neighbour. To keep our selves from being judged, it is equally necessary to judge our selves, and not to judge others: for as our blessed Lord forbiddeth us the one, so his Apostle injoyneth us the other, saying that *If we judged our selves we should not be judged.* But, O God, we do the clean contrarie: for that which is forbidden us we cease not to do, judging our neighbour upon every occasion; and that which is commanded us, which is to judge our selves, we never put in practice.

2. We must use remedies against rash judgements according to their causes. There are some hearts harsh, bitter, and virulent by nature, which make also bitter whatsoever they receive, converting judgement (as the Prophet saith) into wormwood, never judging their neighbour but with rigour and bitternesse. These have great need to fall into the hands of some good spirituall Physician; for this bitternesse of heart being naturall to them, is hard to overcome. And though in it self it be no sinne but onely an imperfection, yet is it dangerous, because it introduceth and causeth to reign in the soul rash judgement and detraction. Some judge rashly, not in bitternesse, but in pride, imagining that by how much they diminish other mens

mens honour by so much they increase their own. A-rogant and presumptuous spirits, which admire themselves, and place themselves so high in their own estimation, that they look upon every thing else as base and abject ! *I am not as other men*, said the foolish Pharisee. Others have not this manifest pride, but take onely a certain little satisfaction to consider other mens evill, the better and more contentedly to savour the contrary good where-with they think themselves indowed. And this complaisance is so secret and so hard to be perceived, that without a good sight it cannot be discovered ; and they themselves that are touched with it cannot know it untill it be shewed them. Others to flatter and excuse themselves towards themselves, and to mitigate the remorse of their own consciences, very willingly judge other men faultie in the same vice to which they find themselves addicted, or some other as great, believing that the multitude of offenders makes sins lesse blameable. Many accustome themselves to judge rashly onely for the pleasure they take to discourse, and make conjectures of other mens manners and humours by way of exercising their wits. And if by mischance they happen upon truth in their judgement, boldnesse, and a desire of

continuing in this folly increase so much that they are hardly diverted from it. Others judge in passion, thinking alwayes well of what they love, and alwayes ill of what they hate ; saving in one onely case very admirable, yet true, wherein the excessse of love provoketh them to make an ill judgement of that which they love: a monstrous effect, but proceeding alwaies from an impure, infirm, troubled, and imperfect love: & this is Jealousie; which, as every man knoweth, upon a mere look, upon the least smile in the world, condemneth the partie beloved of disloyaltie or adulterie. In fine, fear, ambition, and other such infirmities of the mind do ordinarily contribute towards the breeding of suspicious and rash judgements.

3. But what remedy ? They who drink the juice of the hearb in Ethiopia called *Ophiusa*, imagine that they see themselves invironed with horrible serpents and dreadfull things : they who have swallowed down pride, envie, ambition, and hatred, think all things they see faultie and blameable. Those, to be healed, must drink wine made of palms; and these must drink as much as they can of the sacred wine of charitie, to purge them of these humours which cause them to make such perverse judgements. Charitie is affraid to meet  
evil,

evil, so far is she from seeking after it: when she meeteth it she turneth away her face, and seems not to see it; nay, at the first noise of evil, she shutteth her eyes that she may not see it, and afterwards believes with a holy innocencie that it was not evil, but onely the shadow or gholt of evil: and if she be forced to acknowledge it to be evil, instantly she turneth away from it, and indeavoureth to forget the form thereof. Charitie is the soveraign remedie against all evils, but especially against this.

4. All things seem yellow to those that are sick of the jaundise, and they say, that to cure them they must wear Celandine under the soles of their feet. The sinne of rash judgement is a spirituall jaundise, and maketh all things appear faultie to their eyes who are infected therewith; he that will be cured of it must apply the remedies, not to his eyes, nor to his understanding, but to his affections which are the feet of the soul. If thy affections be milde, such will thy judgement be; if charitable, thy judgement will also be charitable. I present thee with three examples. Isaac had said that Rebecca was his sister: Abimelech saw him playing with her, that is making very much of her, and presently he judged she was his wife; a malicious eye would

rather have judged her to have been his strumpet, or if she were his sister, that he had been incestuous : But Abimelech followed the most charitable opinion that he could gather from such an action. We must alwayes do the like, Philothea, in favour of our neighbour so much as is possible : and if one action could have a hundred faces we should alwayes look upon the fairest. Our B. Lady was great with child, and S. Joseph perceived it plainly : but because on the other side he saw her pure, holy, and Angelicall, he could not beleve that she became with child by any means contrary to her sanctitie ; so that he resolved in forsaking her secretly, to leave the judgement of it to God. And though the argument were pregnant to make him conceive an ill opinion of the Virgin, yet would he never judge her by it ; and why ? because ( saith the spirit of God ) he was just. A just man, when he can no longer excuse neither the action, nor the intention of him whom otherwise he knowes to be an honest man, yet will not he judge him, but putteth the remembrance of it out of his mind, and leaveth the judgement to God. Our B. Saviour upon the Crosse, though he could not altogether excuse the sin of them that crucified him, yet did he diminish the malice  
of

of it, alledging their ignorance. When we cannot excuse the sin, let us at least render it worthe of compassion, attributing it to the most tolerable cause we may, as to ignorance, or infirmitie.

5. But may we never then judge our neighbour? no verily, never. It is God that judgeth even malefactours in publick justice. It is true that he useth the voice of Magistrates to make himself understood by us; they are his interpreters, and ought to pronounce nothing but what they have learned of him, as being his oracles; if they do otherwise, following their own passions, then it is they indeed that judge, and consequently they shall be judged: for men are forbidden (as they are men) to judge others.

6. To see or know a thing, is not to judge it: for judgement, at least according to the Scripture-pharse, presupposeth some little or great, true or apparent controversie to be ended; wherefore it saith, that they who believe not are already judged, because there is no doubt of their damnation. It is not then ill done to doubt of our neighbour; no, for we are not forbidden to doubt but to judge: yet ought we neither to doubt nor suspect, but precisely so farre as reasons and arguments constrain us, otherwise even doubts and suspicions are rash.

7. If some evil eye had seen Jacob kisse Rachel by the Well, or Rebecca receive ear-rings and bracelets from Eliezer, a man unknown in that countrey, he would no doubt have thought ill of these two patterns of chastitie, but without reason and ground; for when an action is of it self indifferent, it is rash suspicion to draw an ill consequence from it, unlesse many circumstances give force to the argument. It is also a rash judgement to draw an argument from the action to blame the person; but of this we shall speak more clearly by and by.

8. In fine, those that have care of their consciences are not very subject to rash judgement: For as bees seeing mists or cloudie weather, retire to their hives to order their honey; so the thoughts of good people never wander abroad upon doubtful objects, or amongst the obscure actions of their neighbours; but to avoid such occasions, they retire themselves into the closet of their hearts, there to order the good resolutions of their own amendment.

9. It is the part of an unprofitable soul to busie her self in examining other mens lives: I except such as have charge of others, as well in common-wealhs as in private families; for a great part of their conscience consisteth in watching diligently  
over

over that of others : let them then do their duty with love, and that done, let them keep themselves within themselves in this particular.

## CHAP. XXIX.

### *Of Detraction.*

1. **R**ASH judgement breedeth disquiet, contempt of our neighbour, pride, self-conceit, and a hundred other most pernicious effects; among which detraction bath the first place, as the true plague of conversation. O that I had one of the burning coals of the holy Altar, to touch the lips of men to the end their iniquities might be abolished, and their sinne cleansed, in imitation of the Seraphin that purified the mouth of the Prophet Esay ! He that could deliver the world from detraction, might free it from a great part of the sinnes of iniquitie.

2. Whosoever taketh unjustly from his neighbour his good name, besides the sinne he committeth, is bound to make reparation, though differently according to the diversity of the slanders : for no man can enter into heaven with other mens goods ; and amongst all exteriour goods a good name is the most precious. Slander is a kind of murther ; for we have three lives, the spirituall, which consists in the grace



of God, the corporall, which is in the soul, and the civil, which consisteth in our good name : sin depriveth us of the first, death of the second, and detraction of the third. But a slanderer by one blow of his tongue committeth ordinarily three murders; he killeth his own soul, and his that heareth him by a spirituall homicide, and taketh away the civil life from him whom he slandereth : for ( as S. Bernard saith ) he that detraeth, and he that hearkeneth to the detractour, both of them have the Devil about them ; for the one hath him in his tongue, and the other in his ear. *They have whetted their tongues like serpents*, saith David, speaking of detractours: now the serpents tongue is forked, ( as Aristotle saith ) and so is that of a detractour, who at once stingeth and poisoneth the ear of the hearer, and the reputation of him whom he slandereth.

3. I conjure thee then ( most dear Philothea ) that thou never speak ill of any man directly or indirectly : take heed of imposing false crimes and sins upon thy neighbour : never discover his secret sins, nor aggravate those that are manifest : never make evil interpretation of his good works : never denie the goodnesse which thou knowest to be in him, nor dissemble it maliciously, nor diminish it by words : for  
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in all this thou shalt highly offend God; but most of all by false accusation, and denying the truth to the prejudice of thy neighbour, for it is a double sinne to lie, and to prejudice thy neighbour both at once.

4. They that to speak ill of another make prefaces of honour, or mingle their discourse with facetious conceits, are the most venomous detractours of all. I protest (say they) I love him, and in other things he is a gallant man; but yet the truth must be told, he did ill to commit such a treachery. She is a very virtuous maid, but she was surpris'd: and such like flourishes. Seest thou not this slight of theirs? He that would shoot in a bow draweth the arrow as near to himself as he can, but it is onely to shoot it away with greater force: These detractours seem to draw their flanders towards themselves, but it is onely to shoot them away with greater force, that they may pierce deeper into the hearts of the hearers.

5. Detraction uttered by way of jesting is the most cruell of all: for as the Hemlock is not of it self a very violent but a gentle poison, and easily remedied, yet being taken with wine, it is remediless: so detraction, which of it self would passe lightly in at one ear and out at another, sticketh

eth fast in the memory of the hearers when it is couched in some subtile and merrie jest. *They have* (saith David) *the venome of Asps under their lips.* The stinging of the Asp is scarce to be felt, and his venome at the first breedeth a delightfull itching, by means of which the bowels and heart open themselves, and receive the poison against which afterward there is no remedie.

6. Say not such a one is a drunkard, although thou hast seen him drunk; nor he is an adulterer, though he have been taken in that sinne; nor that such a one is an incestuous person, for having been found in that crime; for one onely a<sup>d</sup> giveth not the name to a thing. The sunne stood still once in favour of Josuas victory, and was darkened another time in favour of that of our Saviour; yet none will say that the sunne is immoveable, or dark. Noah was once drunk, and Lot another time, and he also committed a great incest, yet neither the one nor the other were drunkards, nor was the latter an incestuous person: nor S. Peter a bloud-shedder, for having once shed bloud; nor a blasphemer, though he once blasphemed. To bear the name of a vice or a virtue, it is necessary to make a progresse, & gain a habit therein: it is an imposture to say one is cholerick, be.

because we have seen him once angry ; or a thief, because he hath once stolen. Although a man have been a long time vitious, yet we incur danger of lying to call him a vitious person. Simon the leaper called Mary Magdalene a sinner, because she had been so not long before ; yet lyed he, for she was then no more a sinner but a most holy penitent ; and therefore our Saviour took her cause into his protection. The foolish Pharisee held the Publican for a great sinner, peradventure for an unjust man, an adulterer, or ravisher ; but he was much deceived, for at that very time was he justified.

7. Alas ! since the goodnesse of God is so great, that one moment sufficeth to obtain and receive his grace, what assurance can we have, that he who was yesterday a sinner is so to day ? the day past ought not to judge the day present, nor the present that which is past, there is but the last which judgeth all. We can then never say a man is wicked, without danger of lying : that which we may say ( in case we must speak ) is, that he did such an ill act, he lived ill such a time, he doth ill for the present ; but we may draw no consequence from yesterday to this day, nor from this day to yesterday, much lesse to to morrow.

8. Now though we must be extreemly wary

wary never to speak ill of our neighbour, yet must we take heed of an extremity, into which some do fall, who to avoid slander, commend and speak well of vice. If thou find a slanderer indeed, say not, to excuse him, that he is a free and liberall speaker; or of a notorious vain man, say not that he is gentile and neat; of dangerous familiarities say not they are plain and harmlesse follies; dissemble not disobedience with the name of zeal, nor arrogancies with the name of freedome, nor wantonnesse with the title of friendship. No, dear Philothea, thinking to avoid the sinne of slander, we must not favour, flatter, or cherish other vices; but roundly and freely speak ill of evil, and blame that which is blameable, for in this we glorifie God, so that we observe these conditions following.

9. To reprehend safely another mans faults, it is necessary that the advantage of him of whom we speak, or of them to whom we speak require it. I discourse before maids of the indiscreet familiarities of such and such, which are manifestly dangerous; the extravagancies of this or that person, in speeches or gesture, which are plainly lascivious: If I reprehend not freely this evil, but rather excuse it, these tender souls who hear me will take occasion

casion to let themselves loose to some such mischief. Their profit then requireth that I freely reprehend things at the instant, unlesse I may discreetly reserve this good office to a better opportunity, when I may lesse prejudice those of whom I speak.

10. Moreover it is requisite that it belong to me to speak upon this subject; as when I am of the chief of the company, and that if I speak not it would seem that I approve the vice; for if I be one of the least then I must not undertake to censure. But above all it is necessary, that I be exactly just in my discourse, and not say one word too much. For example, if I blame the wanton familiarity of this young man, and that young maid, because it is too indiscreet and dangerous: O God, Philothea, we must hold the ballance so even, as not to make the fault heavier, no not one grain. If there be but onely a weak appearance, I will say no more; if but a meer indiscretion, I will give it no worse name; if neither indiscretion nor probable appearance of evil, but that some malicious spirit may have from thence taken occasion to speak ill, I will say so, or nothing at all. My tongue while I judge my neighbour is in my mouth like a rasour in the hand of a chirurgian, that would cut between the sinews

sinews and the muscles. The blow I give must be so just, that I say neither more nor lesse then the exact truth. In fine, it must be our principall care in blaming vice, to spare as much as may be the person in whom it is.

11. It is true, that of infamous, publick, and notorious sinners we may speak freely, so that it be with the spirit of charity and compassion, and not in arrogancy or presumption, nor to please our selves in the misfortunes of others: which latter is alwayes the part of a poor and abject heart. I except alwayes the declared enemies of God and his Church, for those we must disparage as much as we can; as all hereticks, schismaticks, and their fomenters: it is charity to cry against the wolf when he is among the sheep, yea where ever he be.

12. Every one takes a liberty to censure Princes, and speak ill of whole nations, according to the diversitie of affections that men bear them. Philothea, commit not this fault; for besides the offence to God, it may raise thee up a thousand quarrels.

13. When thou hearest any detraction, make the accusation doubtfull if thou canst do it justly; if not, excuse the intention of the party censured; if that can not be done, shew compassion towards his frailty, divert the discourse, remembering

bring and putting thy hearers in mind, that they who offend not owe all the thanks of it to God: recall the detractour to himself by some milde way, and speak some good of the party slandered if thou knowest any.

### CHAP. XXX.

*Other advises touching discourse.*

1. **LET** our language be courteous, sincere, plain, innocent, and faithfull: take heed of dissimulation and deceit; for though it be not alwayes good to tell all sorts of truth, yet is it never lawfull to oppose the truth. Never accustome thy self to lie wittingly, neither by way of excuse nor otherwise, remembring alwayes that God is the God of truth. If thou tell a lye unawares, and canst correct it at the instant, either by some explication, or reparation, fail not to do it: a rare excuse hath much more grace and force then a lye.

2. Though a man sometime may prudently and discreetly disguise and cover a truth by some sleight of discourse, yet must not that be used but in matters of importance, when the glory and service of God manifestly requireth it: in any other case such craft is dangerous; for, as the holy Scripture saith, *the holy Ghost dwelleth not in a dissembling and double spirit.* No cunning



ning is so good as plain dealing : worldly wisdom and carnall craft belong to the children of this world ; but the children of God walk uprightly , and their heart is free from guile. *He that walketh innocently (saith the wise-man) walketh confidently.* Lying, double dealing, and dissembling are alwayes signs of a weak and poore spirit. S. Augustine had said in the 4. book of his Confes. *that his soul and that of his friend were but one soul; and that his life was tedious to him after the death of his friend, because he could not live by halves; and yet that for the same cause he was unwilling to dye, lest his friend should dy wholly.* These words afterward seemed to him too artificiall & affectate, insomuch as he revoked them in the book of his retractations, and calls them folly. Thou seest, dear Philothea, how tender this holy soul was of affectation in speech. Surely fidelity, plainnesse, and sincerity are great ornaments to a Christian life: *I have said I wil take heed to my ways, that I offend not in my tongue : Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth and a doore which may shut my lips,* saith David. It is an advise of the holy King Saint Lewis to contradict no man, unlesse it were either sinne or great prejudice to consent to him : and this is to avoid all quarrells and disputes. But when  
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it is necessary to contradict, or be of an opinion contrary to that of another man, use great mildnesse and dexterity, without forcing his spirit ; for nothing is gained by rude contradiction.

3. To speak little, (which is so much recommended by our wise fore-fathers) is not to be understood that we must speak few words, but few unprofitable words ; for in this matter of discourse we regard not so much the quantity, as the quality, and in my opinion we ought to shie both extreames. For to be too reserved and severe, refusing to contribute to the familiar discourse used in conversation, argueth either distrust or disdain : and on the other side, to prate and babble alwaies, and give neither leisure nor opportunity to others to speak in turn, savoureth of shallownesse and levity.

4. S. Lewis held it not good to whisper in company, (especially at the table) least it should give occasion to others to suspect that ill is spoken of them. *He that is at table (saith he) in good company, and hath any thing merry and pleasant to utter, let him speak that all the company may hear him : if it be a thing of importance, let him not speak of it at all.*

## CHAP. XXXI.

*Of Pastimes, and Recreations : and first of such as are lawful, and laudable.*

1. **I**T is necessary sometimes to refresh our spirit, and our bodies also with some kind of recreation. S. John the Evangelist (as Cassian saith) was found by a huntsman with a Partridge upon his fist, which he made much of for his recreation: the huntsman asked him, how he being a man of so great esteem could take delight in so poor and trivial a thing: and S. John answered; wherefore dost thou not carry thy bow alwaies bent? the huntsman replied, if it should be alwaies bent it would loose its force, and become unuseful: wonder not then (said the Apostle) if I sometimes release the rigour and attention of my spirit, to take a little recreation, that I may afterwards return with more vigour to contemplation. It is doubtlesse a vice to be so severe, harsh, and rigorous, as neither to allow our selves, nor permit to others any kind of lawfol recreation.

2. To take the ayr, to walk, entertain our selves with merry and friendly discourses, to play on the Lute and other instruments, to sing, to go a hunting, are recreations so harmlesse, that to use them  
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well there needs but ordinary discretion, which giveth every thing order, place, season, and measure.

3. Those games in which the gain serves for a price and recompence, for the dexterity or industry of the body or mind, as tennis, baloon, pale maifle, running at the ring, chesse, tables, are of themselves good and lawful: onely excesse is to be avoided, either in the time employed in them, or in the summ that is played for; because if too much time be spent in them, they are no more recreation but businesse, and neither mind nor body are refreshed, but contrariwise both are tired and stupified. Having played five or six houres at chesse, the spirit is altogether wearied and toiled. To play long at tennis, is not to recreate the body but to ruine it. And if the summ which is played for be too great, the affections of the gamesters become inordinate: and besides, it is an unjust thing to hazard so much upon abilities and industries of so little importance, and so unprofitable as those of play. But above all, Philothea, take heed thou set not thy affection upon this; for how lawful soever any recreation be, it is a vice to set the heart and affection upon it, to long after it, or to trouble and vex thy self with it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXII.

*Of prohibited Games.*

I. **P**Laying at dice, cards, and such like games, wherein the gain depends principally upon chance, are not onely dangerous recreations, (as are dances) but simply and naturally evil and reprehensible: wherefore they are forbidden by all laws, as well civil, as ecclesiastical. But thou wilt say, what great harm is there in them? The gain is not made in these games according to reason, but according to fortune, which falls often upon him who by ability or industry deserveth nothing; reason is then offended in that. But thou wilt say, we have so agreed it: that serves indeed to shew that he who wins does no wrong to the rest, but warrants neither the agreement nor the gain from being unreasonable: for the gain which ought to be the reward of industry, becomes the recompence of fortune, which deserves none at all since it no way depends upon us. Besides, these games bear the name of recreations, and are made to that end; yet they are not so, but rather tyring businesse: for how is it not businesse to keep the spirit bent and wound up to the height by continual attention, and vexed with perpetual unquietnesse, apprehensions, and

and solicitude? is there any attention more irksome, and melancholick then that of gamesters? and therefore at play we must not speak, nor laugh, nor cough, for fear of giving offence. In fine, there is no pleasure at play but in winning; and this pleasure is it not unjust, since it cannot be had but by the losse and displeasure of our friend? certainly this contentment is infamous. For these three reasons are these games prohibited.

2. The great King S. Lewis, hearing that the Count of Anjou his Brother, and Mounf. Gautier at Nemours were at play, arose sick out of his bed and went staggering to their chamber, and taking the tables, dice, and part of the money, cast them all out at window into the Sea, and was much moved at them. The holy and chaste Sara representing her innocency to God, used this argument; Thou knowest, O Lord, that I have never conversed with gamesters.

### CHAP. XXXIII.

*Of Dancing and other pastimes which are lawful, but dangerous.*

1. DANCES and balls in their own nature are things indifferent; but as they are ordinarily used they incline much to evil, and consequently are full of danger. They  
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are used by night, in darknesse and obscurity : and it is very ealie to slide obscure and vitious accidents into a subject so capable of evil. They watch long in their pastimes, and afterwards loose the mornings, and by consequence the opportunity of serving God. In a word, it is alwaies folly to change day into night, light into darknesse, and good works into wantonnesse. Every one striveth who shall carry thither most vanity : and vanity is so great a disposition to depraved affections, and dangerous and reprehensible loves, that all those mischiefs are easily ingendred in dances.

2. I say of dances, Philothea, as Physicians say of Mushromes ; the best of them are nothing worth , yet if thou wilt needs eat mushroms be sure they be well drest : if upon some occasion, which thou canst not well excuse , thou must go to a ball, see that thy dance be well ordered : But how must it be well ordered ? with modesty, gravity, and honest intention.

3. Eat but seldome , and little of muthroms; (say the Physicians ) for be they never so well drested , the quantity makes them poysonous. Dance little, and very seldome, Philothea ; for otherwise thou puttest thy self in danger to become affectionate to it.

4. Mushroms,

4. Mushrooms, according to Pliny, being spongie and porous, do easily draw infection to them, so that being near serpents and toads they receive venome from them : Maiques, dances, and other night meetings ordinarily attract the vices and sins of the time into one place, as quarrels, envie, scoffing, and wanton loves : and as these exercises open the pores of the body, so they also open the pores of the heart ; by means whereof if any serpent taking the advantage breathe into the ear some wanton word or lascivious discourse, or if some Basilisk glance an unchaste look or immodest eye, the heart thus opened is easily seised on and poysoned. O Philothea, these impertinent recreations are ordinarily dangerous, they distract the spirit of devotion, weaken the forces, make charitie cold, and stir up in the soul a thousand evill affections : and therefore they are to be used with great discretion.

§. But above all, they say that after mushrooms we must drink wine : and I say, that after dancing it is necessarie to use good and holy meditations, to hinder those dangerous impressions which the vain pleasure taken in dancing may have left in our mind. But what meditations ?

1. That whilest thou wert at the masque, many souls did burn in hell-fire  
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for sinnes committed in dancing, or by occasion of it. 2. Many religious and devout persons were at that very time in the presence of God, singing his praises, and contemplating his beautie: Oh, how much more happily was their time spent then thine! 3. Whilest thou wert dancing, many souls departed out of this world in great anguish, many thousand men and women suffered great pains in their beds, in hospitals, in the streets, by the gout, stone, and burning fevers: Alas! they have had no rest, and wilt thou have no compassion of them? And thinkest thou not that one day thou shalt groan as they did, whilest others shall dance as thou didst? 4. Our B. Saviour, our Lady, the Angels, and Saints beheld thee dancing: Ah! how did they pittie thee, seeing thy heart busied in these trifles, and so attentive to this trash! 5. Alas! whilest thou wert there the time is passed away, and death is come nearer; see how he mocks thee, and calls thee to his dance, in which the groans of thy friends shall be the musick, and where thou shalt make but one step from life to death. This dance is the true pastime of mortall men, since by it we passe in a moment from time to eternitie of joyes or pains. I have set thee down these few considerations; God will suggest better to thee, if thou fear him.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*At what times we may play and dance.*

1. **T**O make playes and dances lawfull, we must use them for recreation not for affection, for a short time not till we be wearied, and tired with them; we must also use them seldome, for otherwise we turn recreation into businesse. But in what occasions may we use playing and dancing? just occasions of dancing and moderate playing are more frequent; those of unlawfull games more rare; and such games also are much more blameable and dangerous. But in one word, dance and play according to the rules I have prescribed thee, when to comply with civill company thou shalt find it fit in wisdom and discretion. For compliance, as a branch of charitie, maketh indifferent things good, and dangerous tolerable, and even taketh away the mischief from those things that are in some sort evill; and therefore games of hazard, which otherwise would be reprehensible, are not so when we use them in compliance.

2. I was much pleased to reade in the life of S. Charles Borromeus that he complied with the Suiffers in some things, wherein otherwise he was very severe; and that S. Ignatius of Loyola, being invited

to play, refused it not : S. Elisabeth of Hungarie played and danced sometimes, and was present at meetings of recreation, without prejudice to her devotion, which was so deeply rooted in her soul, that as the rocks about the lake of Rietta grow greater by the beating of the waves, so her devotion increased among pomps and vanities whereto her condition exposed her. Great fires are made bigger by the wind, but little ones are soon blown out if we carrie them not covered.

### CHAP. XXXV.

*That we must be faithfull both in great and small occasions.*

1. **T**He sacred Spouse in the Canticles saith, that his Spouse had stoln away his heart with one of her eyes, and one of her hairs. Now among all the exterior parts of mans body, none is more noble, be it for the workmanship, or for the activitie, then the eye, nor none more mean then the hair. Wherefore the divine Spouse would have us know, that he accepts not only the great works of devout persons, but even the least and meanest ; and that to serve him according to his liking, we must take great care to serve him well, not onely in great and high things, but also in low and abject : we may equally by the one and the other rob him of his heart by love. 2. Pre-

2. Prepare thy self then, Philothea, to suffer many great afflictions, yea martyrdom it self for Gods sake; resolve to give him all that thou esteamest most precious, when it shall please him to take it. father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, children, yea even thine own eyes, and thy life; for to all this thou oughtest to prepare thy heart. But as long as his divine providence sends thee not afflictions so sensible and heaveie, and requires not thine eyes, at least give him thy hair; I mean, suffer meekly small injuries, such little inconveniences and inconsiderable losses as happen dayly: for by the means of such little occasions managed with love and charitie, thou shalt gain his heart intirely, and make it thine own. These little dayly charities, the head-ache, tooth-ach, rheum, the humour of a husband or wife, the breaking of a glasse, this contempt, or that scorn, the losse of a pair of gloves, of a ring, a handkerchief, any little inconvenience in going late to bed, and rising early to pray, to communicate, the little shamefastnesse we have in doing some acts of devotion in publick, briefly, all these little sufferings accepted & imbraced for the love of God, do infinitely please his divine goodness, who for one glass of water hath promised a sea of felicity to his servants. And

because these occasions offer themselves every moment, the well managing of them will be a great means to heap up spirituall treasures.

3. When I read in the life of S. Katharine of Siena so many raptures, and elevations of spirit, so many wise sayings, and even sermons made by her, I doubted not but that with this fair eye of contemplation she had stollen away the heart of her heavenly Spouse, but I was no lesse pleased to find her in her fathers kitchen turning the spit, mending the fire, dressing meat, kneading bread, and doing the meanest offices of the house, with a courage full of love and charity towards God: and I esteem no lesse the little and humble meditations which she made amongst these mean employments, then the extasies and raptures she had so often, which peradventure were given her onely in recompence of this humilitie and abjection. And her meditations were such: When she prepared meat for her father, she imagined that she prepared it for our Saviour, like S. Martha, and that her mother was in place of our B. Lady, and her brothers in stead of the Apostles; in this sort exciting her self to serve in spirit al the court of heaven, and imploying herself with great delight in such low services, because she knew

it was Gods wil. I have brought this example, Philothea, that thou maist know of what importance it is rightly to direct all thy actions, be they never so mean, to the service of his divine majestie.

4. Wherefore I earnestly counsell thee to imitate this couragious woman, whom the great King Solomon so highly commendeth : she set her hand (as he saith) to high, generous, and important things; and yet disdained not to handle the distaff and spindle. Put thou thy hands to great things, exercising thy self in prayer and meditation, in frequenting the Sacraments, endeavouring to beget the love of God in souls, to infuse good inspirations into hearts, and in a word, to do great and excellent good works, according to thy calling: but withall forget not thy distaff and spindle; that is, practise these low and humble virtues, which like flowers grow at the foot of the Crosse; as, serving the poor, visiting the sick, care of thy familie, with the works depending thereupon, and use herein all profitable diligence, which will keep thee from idlenesse: and amongst all these things, mingle such considerations as I have related above of S. Katharine.

5. Great occasions of serving God present themselves but seldome, but little ones are ordinary: *now he that shall be faithfull*

*in small matters, (saith our Saviour) shall be set over great things. Do all things then in the name of God, and they will be well done: whether thou dost eat, drink, sleep, recreate thy self, or turn the spit, so thou knowest how to manage thy businesse well, thou wilt profit much in the sight of God, doing all these things in true conformity to his will.*

### CHAP. XXXVI.

*That we must keep our mind just and reasonable.*

1. **WE** are not men but by our reason, and yet is it a rare thing to find men who are truly reasonable, because self-love ordinarily puts us out of the way of reason, leading us insensibly to a thousand kinds of small, yet dangerous injustices and partialities, which like the little foxes in the Canticles, destroy the vines; for, because they are little we regard them not, and because they are many they cease not to annoy us very much.

2. These things of which I am now about to speak, are they not partiall and unreasonable? We accuse our neighbours in small matters, and excuse our selves in great; we would sell very dear, and buy very cheap; we desire that justice should be executed in another mans house, but  
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mercy and connivency in our own ; our words must be well taken, but we are cap<sup>ti</sup>ous and touchy at those of others ; we would have our neighbour leave us his goods taking our money, but is it not more reasonable that he should keep his goods, and leave us our money ? we take it ill that he will not accommodate us, hath he not more reason to be troubled at us for desiring to incommode him ?

3. If we affect one exercise we despise all others, and quarrell with every thing that pleaseth not our own fancy. If there be any of our inferiours which have no good behaviour, or that we have once taken a dislike against him, do he what he will we take it in ill part, and never cease to vex and perplex him. Contrariwise, if any man please us by a better behaviour, he can do nothing but we will excuse it. There are virtuous children whom their parents can scarce abide to look upon because of some bodily imperfection, and many vicious that are their favourites for some corporall handsomnesse : in all things we preferre the rich before the poor, although they be neither of better condition, nor so virtuous ; nay, we preferre them that are best clad. We desire to have our own dues exactly, but that others should be gentle in demanding theirs : we keep our own



rank very precisely, but would have others humble and complying: we complain easily of our neighbour, but none must complain of us: that which we do for others alwayes seems to us very much, but what others do for us seems nothing. In a word, we are like the Partridges in Paphlagonia, which have two hearts; for we have one milde, favourable, and courteous heart towards our selves, and another hard, severe, and rigorous heart towards our neighbour. We have two ballances, one to weigh our own commodities with all advantage possible, the other to weigh those of our neighbours with as much disadvantage as we can. The scripture saith, *deceitfull lips have spoken in heart, and heart*; that is to say, they have two hearts: and to have two weights, the one heavy wherewith to receive in, and the other light wherewith to deliver out, is abominable in the sight of God.

4. Philothea, be equall and just in thy actions: set thy self alwayes in the place of thy neighbour, and put him in thine, and so shalt thou judge aright. Make thy self the seller in buying, and the buyer in selling, and thou shalt be sure to sell & buy justly. All these injustices are small, because they oblige not to restitution, in as much as we exceed not the limits of rigour in  
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what is for our advantage; but they cease not to oblige us to mend them, for they are great defects in reason and charitie; and when all is done, they are but meer fantasies of gain. For a man loseth nothing by living generously, nobly, and freely, with a royall, equall, and liberall heart. Forget not then, Philothea, often to examine if thy heart be such towards thy neighbour, as thou wouldest have his towards thee if thou wert in his place; for this is the point of true reason. Trajan being blamed by his friends for making the Imperiall Majesty too accessible, sayed, *And ought not I to be such an Emperour towards private men, as I would desire an Emperour to be towards me if I were a private man?*

CHAP. XXXVII.  
*Of Desires.*

1. **E**VERY one knoweth that we ought to refrain from desiring vicious things: for the desire of evil makes us evil. But I say yet more, Philothea, desire not those things which are dangerous to the soul, as dancing, gaming, and other such pastimes, nor honours and offices, no nor visions, nor extasies; for there is much danger of vanitie and deceit in all such things. Desire not things which are farre off, that is, such as cannot happen in a long time.



as many do, who thereby do weary and distract their hearts unprofitably, and put themselves in danger of great disquiet. If a young man desire earnestly to be provided of some office before the time come, to what purpose I pray serveth this? If a married woman desire to be a Nun, to what purpose? If I desire to buy my neighbours goods before he desire to sell them, loose I not my labour in this desire? If being sick I desire to preach, or to say Masse, to visit others that are sick, and to perform the exercises of those who are in health, are not these vain desires, since it is not then in my power to effect them? And in the mean time these unprofitable desires fill up the place of others which I should have, of being patient, resigned, well mortified, very obedient, meek, and mild in adversities, which is that which God would have me practise at that time: But we commonly long like women with child, who desire cherries in Autumne and grapes in the Spring.

2. I can no way approve that persons engaged in any employment and vocation should desire another kind of life then that which agrees with their duty, or busie themselves in exercises incompatible with their present condition; for it consumes the heart, & makes it unable for its necessa-

ry duties. If I desire the solitude of a Carthusian, I loose my time, for this desire supplies the place of that which I ought to have to employ my self well in my present office. No, neither would I that one should desire better wit, or better judgement; for these desires are but vain, and fill the place of that which every one ought to have of managing his own, such as it is. Nor would I that one should desire those means to serve God which he hath not, but that he faithfully employ those which he hath. Now this is to be understood of desires which distract the heart; for simple wishes, if they bee not too frequent, do no harm at all.

3. Desire not crosses, but in proportion to the patience wherewith thou hast supported those which have been already sent thee. For it is an abuse to desire martyrdom, and not to have the courage to bear an injury. The enemy often provokes us to ardent desires of things absent, and such as we shall never obtain, thereby to divert us from present objects, wherein (how mean soever) we might much profit our selves. We fight with the monsters of Africa in imagination, and in the mean time for want of attention, we suffer our selves in effect to be slain by the little serpents that ly in the way. Desire not temptations for that  
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were rashnesse: but employ thy heart in expecting them courageously, and to defend thy self from them when they shall come.

4. Variety of meats (especially if the quantity be great) doth alwayes overcharge the stomack, and if it be weak destroys it: Overcharge not thy soul with multitude of thoughts; neither worldly for those will ruine thee, nor yet spirituali for those will perplex thee. When the soul is purged and finds her self free from ill humours, she hath an earnest appetite to spirituall things, and as if she were famished, setteth her desire upon a thousand sorts of exercises of piety, of mortification, of penance, of humility, of charity, and prayer. Philothea, it is a good sign to have so good an appetite: but consider whether thou canst well digest all that thou desirest to eat. Chuse then by advise of thy ghostly father, amongst so many desires those which may be practised, and put them presently in execution, and make thy uttermost profit of them; that done, God will send thee others which thou shalt also practise in their seasons, and so not loose thy time in unprofitable desires. I say not that we should loose any good desire, but that we should produce them in order; so that those which cannot presently be effected, may be locked up in some corner of  
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our heart till their time come, and in the interim we may practise those which are already ripe and in season. This I speak not onely for spirituall persons, but also for secular, without which we cannot live, but in great solicitude and unquietnesse.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

### *Advertisements for married persons.*

1. **M**arriage is a great Sacrament, I say in Jesus Christ and in his Church: it is honourable to all, in all, and through all; that is, in all its parts: to all, because even Virgins themselves ought to reverence it with humility; in all, because it is equally holy in rich and in poor; through all, because its beginning, end, profits, the form, and matter, all are holy. It is the nursery of Christianity which peopleth the earth with faithfull souls, to accomplish the number of the elect in heaven: So that the conservation of marriage is most important to the common-wealth, as being the spring and fountain of all its rivers.

2. Would to God that his most dear sonne were invited to all marriages, as he was to the marriage in Cana; then the wine of blessing and consolation would never want there: for the reason why there is but a little of that wine at first onely, and none after-

afterwards is, because instead of our Saviour we invite Adonis, and Venus instead of our Lady. He that would have his lambs fair and spotted as Jacobs were, must like him set party-coloured rods before the sheep when they meet to engender: and he that would enjoy a happy successe of his marriage, should alwayes lay before him the worth and sanctity of this Sacrament. But alas ! instead of that we have a thousand disorders in pastimes, feasting, and immodest discourse : it is no marvell then if the successe of the marriage be answerable. Above all, I exhort married persons to that mutuall love which the holy Ghost commandeth to such in the Scripture. O you that are married, it is nothing to say love one an other with a naturall love, for turtles do that; nor with a humane love, for the Heathens have practised that kind of love: but I say with the great Apostle, *You that are married, love your wives as Jesus Christ loved his Church : And you wives, love your husbands as the Church loveth her Saviour.* It was God that brought Eve to our first father Adam, and gave him her for his wife ; it is also God who with his invisable hand hath tyed the knot of the holy bond of your marriage, and hath given you to one an other: why do you not cherish one an other with

with a love intirely holy, sacred, and divine?

3. The first effect of this love is the inseparable union of your hearts. Two pieces of firre glewd together, if the glew be good, cleave so fast one to the other, that you may sooner break the pieces in any other place then where they were joyned. But God joyneth the husband to the wife with his own bloud, for which cause this union is so strong, that the soul should rather separate it self from the body of the one and the other, then the husband from the wife. Now this union is not chiefly meant of the body, but of the heart, the affections, and love.

4. The second effect of this love ought to be the inviolable fidelity of the one to the other. Seals were anciently graven upon rings which were worn upon the fingers, as the holy Scripture it self testifies. See then the secret of the ceremony made in marriages. The Church by the hand of the Priest consecrates a ring, and giving it first to the man, testifies that she seals his heart by this Sacrament, to the end that neither the name nor the love of any other woman may enter in there, so long as she liveth who hath been given to him: Afterward the husband puts the ring into his wives hand, that she likewise may understand



stand that her heart ought not to harbour affection to any other man, so long as he shall live upon earth to whom our Saviour there giveth her.

5. The third fruit of marriage is the lawfull generation, and education of children. It is great honour to you that are married, that God resolving to multiply souls which may blesse and praise him for ever, makes you co-operate in so worthy a work by the production of bodies, into which he infuses souls like drops from heaven.

6. Conserve then, you husbands, a tender, constant, and hearty love towards your wives; for the woman was taken from that side of man which was nearest to his heart, to the end that she should be loved by him heartily and tenderly. The weakneses and infirmities of your wives, corporall or spirituall, ought not to provoke you to any neglect, but rather to a sweet and affectionate compassion; since God hath created them such, to the end that depending upon you, you should thereby receive more honour and respect, and that you should have them in such sort for your companions, that neverthelesse you should be their heads and superiours.

7. And you, O wives, love the husbands whom God hath given you tenderly, and heartily:

heartily : but with a love full of respect, and reverence ; for therefore did God create them of a sex more vigorous and predominant ; therefore did he ordain that the woman should be depending upon man, bone of his bone , and flesh of his flesh, and that she should be made of a ribbe of him, and taken from under his arm, to shew that she should be under the hand and guiding of her husband. And all holy Scripture strictly recommendeth to you this subjection ; which notwithstanding the same Scripture renders easie, not onely commanding you to apply yourselves with love , but ordaining also to your husbands to exercise it over you with great charity, tenderneffe, and gentleneffe: *Husbands, ( saith S. Peter ) behave yourselves discretely towards your wives as weaker vessels, bearing them honour and respect.*

8. But while I exhort you more and more to increase this mutual love which you owe one to another , beware you change it not into jealousy. For it often happens, that as wormes breed in the ripest and most beautiful apples, so jealousy growes in the most ardent and vigorous love of married people, of which it spoyles and corrupts the substance , breeding by little and little strifes, dissentions , and divorces.

divorces. Surely jealousie never comes where love is mutually founded upon true virtue; and therefore it is is an infallible mark of a love somewhat grosse and sensual, and which hath happened into a place where it hath met with a weak and inconstant virtue, subject to distrust. It is then a kind of boasting of friendship to desire to excell it by jealousie: for jealousie may well be a sign of greatnesse, and grossenesse of love, but never of the goodnesse, purity, and perfection of it; since perfection of love presupposeth an assurance of the virtue of that which we love, and jealousie presupposeth the uncertainty of it.

9. If you desire, O husbands, that your wives should be faithful to you, give them a lesson by your own example. *With what face* (saith S. Gregory Nazianzen) *can you exact chastity of your wives, when you your selves live unchastly? how can you require of them that which you give them not? will you have them chaste? be-have your selves chastly; and* (as S. Paul saith) *let every man know how to possesse his own vessel in holinesse. For if on the contrary you your selves teach them loose behaviour, no marvail if you receive dishonour in their perdition. But you, O women, whose honour is inseparably joyned*  
with

with your honesty and chastity, be jealous of this your glory, and suffer no kind of wantonnesse to blemish the whitenesse of your reputation. Fear all kind of assaults, be they never so little; suffer not any wantonnesse near you: whosoever shall praise your beauty and behaviour, hold him suspected; for he that commends the ware which he cannot buy, is ordinarily tempted to steal it. But if to your praise any one shall add the dispraise of your husband, he offers you hainous injury; for it is evident that he not onely seeks your ruine, but accounts you already half lost, since the bargain is half made with the second merchant when one is disgusted with the first.

10. Ladies as well heretofore as now wear many pearles in their eares, taking pleasure (saith Pliny) to hear the ratling which they make in touching one another. But I who know that Isaac, that great servant of God, sent precious ear-rings as the first pledge of his love to chaste Rebecca, judge that this mystical ornament signifies, that the first part which a husband should take possession of in his wife, and which his wife should loyally keep for him is her ears; to the end that no other language or noise should enter therein, but onely the sweet and pleasant ratling of chaste

chast and modest words, which are the orient pearles of the holy Gospel: for we must alwaies remember that our souls are poisoned by the ear, as the body by the mouth.

11. Love and loyalty joyned together beget alwaies familiarity and confidence: and therefore the Saints of God have alwaies used many reciprocal embraces in their marriage; embraces truly amorous, yet chaste; tender, yet innocent. So Isaac and Rebecca, the most chaste married couple of ancient times, were seen through a window to embrace one another, insomuch as although there was no immodestie, yet Abimelech judged thereby that they could not be other then man and wife. The great S. Lewis equally rigorous to his own flesh and tender in love to his wife, was almost blamed for too much kindnesse; though indeed he rather deserved praise, in being able to subdue his warlike and couragious spirit to these small duties requisite to the conservation of conjugal love: for although these little demonstrations of pure and free affection bind not the hearts, yet they bring them near together, and serve for an agreeable disposition to mutuall conversation.

12. S. Monica being with child of  
great

great S. Augustine, dedicated him oftentimes to Christian religion, and to the service of Gods glory, as he himself witnesseth, saying, that *he had already tasted the salt of God in his mothers womb.* This is a great example for Christian women to offer up to his Divine Majestie the fruits of their wombs, even before they come into the world: for God who accepteth the offerings of an humble and willing heart, commonly seconds the good affections of mothers at that time; witnesse Samuel, S. Thomas of Aquin, S. Andrew of Fiesola, and divers others. The mother of S. Bernard, (a mother worthy of such a son) so soon as her children were born, took them in her arms and offered them up to Jesus Christ; and from thenceforth loved them with respect, as things consecrated and intrusted to her by God: which succeeded so happily to her, that in the end they all seven became most holy. But children being once come into the world, and beginning to have the use of reason, their parents ought to have an especial care to imprint the fear of God in their hearts. The good Queen Blanch performed this fervently towards her son King Lewis; for she often said unto him, *I had much rather see thee die before mine eyes, then see thee commit one onely mortal sin.*

*sinne.* Which remained so engraven in the soul of this holy child, that (as he himself said) not one day of his life past wherein he did not remember it, endeavouring as much as he was able to practise this divine doctrine. Races and generations in our language are called Houses; and the Hebrewes call generations of children the building up of a House: for in that sense it is said that God built houses for the Midwives of Egypt. Now this is to shew, that to make a good house is not to fill it with store of worldly treasures, but to bring up children in the fear of God and exercise of virtues, wherein no pains nor travail is to be spared; for children are the crown of the parents. So *S. Monica* with fervour and constancy fought against the civil inclinations of her son *S. Augustine*, that having followed him by Sea and land, she made him more happily the child of her teares by conversion of his soul, then he had been of her blood by generation of his body.

13. *S. Paul* leaveth to women the care of their household as their portion: for which cause many hold this true opinion, that their devotion is more profitable to the family, then that of the husbands, who, being not so frequently resident amongst

amongst the servants, cannot by consequence so easily frame them to virtue: and therefore Salomon, in his Proverbs, maketh the happinesse of the whole household to depend upon the care and industrie of that couragious woman whom he describeth.

14. It is written in Genesis that Isaac seeing his wife Rebecca barren, prayed to God for her; or according to the Hebrew, prayed our Lord over against her, because the one prayed on one side of the Oratorie, and the other on the other: so the prayer of her husband made in this manner was heard. The greatest & most fruitful union between man and wife, is that which is made in holy devotion, to which they should draw on one another by emulation. There are fruits (as the quince) which because of their sharpnesse are not pleasing except they be preserved with sugar; others, because of their tendernesse cannot be long kept unlesse they likewise be preserved, as Cherries and Apricocks: so women should wish that their husbands were preserved with the sugar of devotion, for a man without devotion is a creature most severe, harsh, and rugged; and husbands ought also to wish that their wives were devout, because without devotion a woman is very frail, and subject to fade and fall in virtue. S. Paul saith, *that the unbelieving man*



*is sanctified by the believing woman, and the unbelieving woman by the believing man: because in this strait bond of marriage, the one may easily draw the other to virtue: But what a blessing is it when the faithfull man and wife do sanctifie one another in the true fear of God?*

15. To conclude, the mutuall supporting of one another ought to be so great, that they should never be both at once angry, that there should be no strife nor dissention between them. Bees cannot rest in a place where ecchoes or redoublings of voices are heard: nor can the holy Ghost certainly remain in a house where are strifes, debates, contentions, and unquietnesse. S. Gregorie Nazianzen witnesseth that in his time, married persons made a feast upon the anniversarie day of their marriage: truely I could wish that this custome were introduced, so that it were not with preparations of worldly and sensuall recreations; but that the husband and wife, confessing and communicating that day, should recommend to God with more then ordinarie fervour the progresse of their marriage, renewing their good purposes to sanctifie it more and more by mutuall love and loyaltie, recovering strength in our Saviour to support the burthen of their vocation.

## CHAP. XXXIX.

*Of the honestie, and chastitie of the marriage bed.*

1. **T**He marriage bed ought to be immaculate, as the Apostle saith, that is to say, exempt from immodesty and profane uncleanness: so was marriage first instituted in the earthly Paradise, where untill that time there had never been any disorder of concupiscence or unclean things. There is some resemblance between the pleasures of lust and those of eating; for both of them have relation to the flesh, though the first for their brutall violence are called simply carnall. I will then explicate that which I cannot say of the one, by that which I may say of the other.

2. Eating is ordained to nourish us: as then eating merely to nourish is absolutely good, holy, and commanded; so that which is requisite in marriage for generation of children and multiplication of people is good, and most holy, for it is the principall end of marriage.

3. To eat, not for nourishment of life, but to preserve that conversation and compliance which we owe one to another, is a thing very just and honest: so the mutuall and lawfull satisfaction of the parties joyned in holy marriage is called by

S. Paul a debt, and so great a debt as he permitteth neither partie to exempt themselves from it, without free and voluntary consent of the other, no, not for the exercises of devotion: (which made me say that which I said concerning this in the chapter of holy Communion) how much lesse then may either partie exempt themselves from this debt for capricious pretences of virtue, for anger, or disdain?

4. As they that eat for the dutie of mutuall conversation ought to eat freely, and not as it were by force, and to endeavour to shew an appetite to their meat: so the marriage debt should alwayes be payed faithfully, freely, and as it were in hope of procreation, although for some respect there may be no ground of such hope.

5. To eat, not for the two former reasons, but merely to content the appetite is tolerable, but not commendable; for the mere pleasure of the sensuall appetite cannot be a sufficient object to make an action commendable; it is well if it be tolerable.

6. Now the excesse in eating consisteth not in the quantitie onely, but also in the manner of eating. It is strange (dear Philothea) that honie, so wholesome and so proper a food to Bees, should nevertheless be so noysome to them that sometimes

times it makes them sick, as when in the spring they eat too much of it, for then it gives them the flux ; and sometimes kills them without remedie, as when they are behonied with it about their head and wings. Certainly nuptiall commerce, which is so holy, just, commendable, and profitable to the common wealth, is notwithstanding in some cases dangerous ; for sometimes it infecteth the soul with veniall sin, as in case of mere and simple excesse, and sometimes it killeth the soul by mortall sin, as when the order appointed for procreation of children is violated and perverted ; in which case, as one swerveth more or lesse from the order, so are the sins more or lesse hainous but alwayes mortall. For procreation of children being the principall end of marriage, one may never lawfully depart from the order which that end requireth, though for some accident it cannot at that time be effected ; as when barrenesse, or former being with child do hinder the generation : for in these occurrences corporall commerce doth not cease to be holy and just, so that the rules of generation be kept, no accident whatsoever being able to prejudice the law w<sup>ch</sup> the principall end of marriage hath imposed. The infamous & execrable act cōmitted by O-nan in his marriage was detestable before

God, as the holy Text of 28. chap. of Genesis testifies. And although certain hereticks of our dayes, a hundred times more blameable then the ancient Cynicks, (of whom S. Hierome speaketh upon the Epistle to the Ephesians) affirm, that it was the perverse intention of that wicked man which displeased God: yet the Scripture saith otherwise, and assureth us in particular, that the thing it self which he did was abominable in the sight of God.

7. It is a true mark of a sordid, abject, and infamous spirit, to think of meat and feeding before the time of eating; much more when afterwards one meditates upon the pleasure he took in eating, entertaining himself therein by words and thoughts, and wallowing his mind in the remembrance of the sensuall delight he received in swallowing those morsells; as they do who before dinner have their mind on the spitt, and afterwards in the dishes, men worthie to be the skullions of a kitchen, *who make a God of their belly*, as S. Paul saith. Persons of honour never think of the Table but in sitting down, and after dinner wash their hand: & mouth, to lose both taste & smell of what they have eaten. The Elephant is but a great beast, yet is the most worthy of al the rest, & hath most understanding. I will tell you an argument of  
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his goodnesse : he never changeth his female, & loveth her tenderly which he hath chosen, with whom notwithstanding he coupleth not but from three years to three years, and that onely for five dayes, and so secretly that he is never seen in the act; but the sixth day he sheweth himself again, and then the first thing he doth is to go directly to some river where he washes all his body intirely, not willing to return to his companions till he be purified. Are not these good and honest humours in such a beast? by which he invites married persons not to retain their affections ingaged in those sensual and carnall pleasures, which according to their vocation they have exercised; but when they are past to wash their heart and affection from them, and purge themselves as soon as they may, that afterward with all freedom of mind they may practise other actions more pure and elevated. In this advise consisteth the perfect practise of that excellent doctrine of S. Paul to the Corinthians : *The time is short, (saith he) it remaineth that they who have wives be as if they had them not.* For according to S. Gregory, he hath a wife as having none, who in taking corporall pleasure with her is not for that diverted from spiritual exercises. Now what is said of the husband is understood mutu-

ally of the wife : *Let those that use the world* (saith the same Apostle) *be as though they used it not.* Let every one then use this world according to his calling, but in such sort, that engaging not his affection therein, he may be as free and ready to serve God as if he used it not at all. It is the great misfortune of man (saith S. Augustine) to desire to enjoy those things which he should onely use, and only to use those things which he should enjoy: we ought to enjoy spiritual things, and only use corporal things; of which when the use is turned into enjoying, our reasonable soul is also converted into a brutish and bestial soul. I think I have said all I would say, and made my self understood without saying that which I would not say.

## CHAP. XL.

### *Instruction for widowes.*

**S**Aint Paul instructeth all Prelates in the person of his Timothy, saying; *Honour those widowes which are widowes indeed.* To be a widow indeed these things are required.

1. That not onely she be a widow in body, but in heart also; that is, that she be resolved with an inviolable resolution to keep her self in the estate of chaste widowhood. For those who are widowes onely  
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untill another opportunity of marriage present it self, are not separated from men but onely in respect of bodily pleasure, for they are already joyned to them according to the desire of their heart. But if the true widow, to confirm her self in the state of widow-hood, shall offer to God her body and her chastity by vow, she shall adde a great ornament to her widow-hood, and make her resolution secure. For seeing that after her vow it is not in her power to leave her chastity without forsaking heaven, she will be so jealous of her designe, that she will not suffer so much as the least thought of marriage to stay in her heart one only moment: so that this sacred vow will put a strong separation between her soul, and all manner of projects contrary to her resolution. S. Augustine counselleth this vow very earnestly to a Christian widow: and the ancient and learned Origen goeth much farther; for he exhorteth married women to vow and dedicate themselves to a chaste widow-hood in case their husbands die before them; to the end that among the sensual pleasures which they may have in their marriage, they may also enjoy the merit of chaste widow-hood by meanes of this anticipated promise. The vow maketh the works done in performance of it more acceptable to



God, increases courage to put them in execution, and gives to God not onely the good works which are the fruits of our good will, but dedicates likewise to him the will it self as the tree of all our actions. By simple chastitie we lend our body to God, retaining notwithstanding a liberty to subject it when we will to sensuall pleasure: but by the vow of chastitie we make him an absolute and irrevocable gift of our body, without reserving to our selves any power of revocation; thereby happily rendring our selves slaves to him, whose bondage is better then all command. As I now infinitely approve the advise of those two great persons, so could I wish that those soules which are so happy as to follow it, would do it prudently, holily, and firmly, having well examined their forces, invoked heavenly inspiration, and taken the counsell of some wise and devout directour; for so all will be done profitably.

2. Besides that, it is necessary that this renouncing of second marriage be made to no other end then for the more pure and intire dedication of the affections to God, and to joyn the heart firmly to that of his divine Majestie: for if the desire to leave the children rich, or any other worldly respect retain the widow in her widowhood,

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she may perhaps be commended for it, but not before God ; since in his sight nothing can truly merit praise but that which is done for the love of him. It is further necessary that a widow, to be truly a widow, be separated and voluntarily deprived of all prophane pleasures : *for the widow which liveth deliciously (saith S. Paul) is dead while she liveth.* She that would be a widow, and yet delights to be wooed, courted, to be at balls, and feasting, to be perfumed, neatly drest, and trimmed, is a widow alive in body, but dead in soul. What importeth it whether the signe of the house of Adonis, or prophane love be made with white feathers in fashion of a plume, or with black cypres spread like a net round about the face ? yea, often the black is put with advantage of vanity over the white to serve for a foil ; for the widow having made triall of that fashion wherewith women can please men most, casts the more dangerous baits into their fansey. The widow then which liveth in these fond delights is dead being alive, and speaking properly, is nothing but an idol of widowhood.

3. *The time of pruning is come, the voice of the turtle hath been heard in our land, saith the Canicle.* All that will live devoutly must prune and shave away

away all worldly superfluities : but this is principally necessary to a true widow, who like a chaste Turtle comes fresh from bewailing and lamenting the losse of her husband. When Noemi returned from Moab to Berthelem, the women of the town, who had known her when she was first married, said one to another, is not this Noemi ? but she answered, call me not Noemi, I pray you, ( for Noemi signifieth comely and well-favoured ) but call me Mara, for our Lord hath filled my soul with bitternesse ; which she said, because her husband was dead. Even so the devout widow will never be called or esteemed either fair or comely, contenting her self to be such as God will have her to be, that is to say, humble, and lowly in his eyes.

4. Lamps with sweet oyl cast a fragrant smell when they are put out : so widowes whose love hath been pure in their marriage, send forth a sweet perfume of virtue and chastitie when their light (that is their husbands) is extinguished by death. To love the husband being alive is an ordinarie thing amongst women : but to love him so well as after his death to hear of no other, is a love which appertaineth only to true widows. To hope in God whilst the husband serves for a support is not

so rare : but to hope in God when one is destitute of this support is very commendable. Wherefore it is easie to know in widowhood the perfection of virtue which a woman had in marriage.

5. The widow that hath children which have need of her care and conduct, principally in matters concerning their souls and settling their course of life, neither can, nor ought in any wise to abandon them ; for the Apostle S. Paul saith clearly, that they are obliged to take that care of their children which their parents had before of them, and that if any have not care of those which belong to them, and principally of their own family, they are worse then infidels. But if her children be in state to need no more her guiding, then should she gather together all her affections and thoughts, to employ them purely and intirely to advance them in the love of God.

6. If some absolute necessity oblige not the conscience of the true widow to outward troubles, as suits in law, I counsel her to avoid them altogether, and to use that order in managing her affairs which is most quiet and peaceable, although it seem not so profitable. For the fruits of troubles must be very great, to countervail the blessing of a holy tranquillity ; besides, wrangling pleas and processe distract the heart, and often

often open a gate to the enemies of chastity, while to please them whose favour they seek, they are forced to use such behaviour as is neither suitable to devotion nor pleasing to God.

7. Let prayer be the widows continuall exercise; for seeing she ought now to have no other love but to God, she must have almost no discourse but for God. And as the iron, which by the presence of the diamond is hindred from following the loadstone, leaps after it so soon as the diamond is removed: so the heart of the chaste widow, which could not well give it self intirely to God, nor follow the invitation of his divine love during the life of her husband, ought immediately after his death to run with fervour to the sweet odours of those heavenly perfumes, saying in imitation of the sacred spouse, O Lord, now that I am all mine own, receive me for all thine; *Draw me after thee, and I will run to the perfume of thy ointments.*

8. The virtues proper to a holy widow are perfect modesty, renouncing of all honours and precedency in meetings, titles, and all sorts of vanities, serving the poore and the sick, comforting the afflicted, instructing young maids in devotion, and making themselves a perfect pattern of all virtues to young women. Cleanlineffe  
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and plainnesse must be the two ornaments of their apparell ; humility and charity the two ornaments of their actions ; sincerity and mildnesse the two ornaments of their eyes ; and Christ Jesus crucified the onely love of their hearts. In summe, the true widow is in the Church a little violet of March, which sends forth an incomparable sweetnesse by the fragrancy of her devotion, and keeps her self alwayes hidden under the broad leaves of her humility, and by her modest colours testifies her mortification: she grows in green wild places, and desires not to be importuned with the conversation of worldly persons, the better to preserve the freshnesse of her heart against all the heats which the desire of riches, of honour, or of fond loves might bring thither. *She shall be blessed (saith the holy Apostle) if she persevere in this sort.*

9. I could say many other things upon this subject, but I shall have sayed all in advising the widow, who is tender of the honour of her condition, to read attentively the excellent epistles which great S. Hierom wrote to Furia, Salvia, and all those other Ladies which were so happy as to be the ghostly children of so great a father: for nothing can be added to that which he saith but onely this admonition; That a true widow ought never to blame  
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nor censure those who passe to the second, yea to the third and fourth marriages; for in some cases God so disposeth of them for his greater glory: and that this doctrine of our predecessours be ever before her eyes; that neither widowhood nor virginity have any other place in heaven, then that which is assigned them by humility.

## CHAP. XL I.

### *A word to Virgins.*

**O** Virgins, If you pretend to temporall marriage, keep your first love inviolably for your first husband. In my judgement, it is great deceit to present instead of an intricate and sincere heart, a heart overworn, racked, and tyred out with love. But if your better fortunes call you to a pure & chaste spirituall marriage, and that you desire to dedicate for ever your virginity to God, keep your loves the most tenderly you can for this heavenly spouse, who being purity it self, loves nothing so much as purity, and to whom are due the first fruits of all things, but principally of our love. S. Hieroms Epistles will furnish you with all advises necessary for you. And since your condition obligeth you to obedience, chuse you a guide, under whose direction you may with more holinesse dedicate your heart and body to his divine Majesty.

THE

# THE FOURTH PART OF THE INTRODUCTION,

Containing necessary instructions against  
the most ordinary Temptations.

## CHAP. I.

*That we must not regard the discourse of  
the children of the world.*

1. SO soon as the children of this world shall perceive that thou desirest to embrace a spirituall life, they will discharge against thee a thousand arrows of idle tales and deceptions. The most malicious will brand thy change with hypocrisie, dissimulation, and superstition; they will tel thee, that because the world looks ill upon thee and is not thy friend, thou presently runnest to God. Thy friends will strain themselves to make thee a world of remonstrances, very wise and charitable, as they imagine. They will tell thee thou wilt fall into some melancholly humour, thou wilt loose thy credit in the world, and render thy self insociable, thou wilt grow old before thy time, thy domesticall affairs will suffer thereby, thou must live in the world as one in the world, salvation may be obtained without so many mysteries; and a thousand such like impertinencies.

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2. Philothea, all this is but vain and foolish prating. These people regard neither thy health nor businesse. *If you were of the world* (saith our blessed Saviour) *the world would love that which were his: but because you are not of the world therefore the world hateth you.* We have seen Gentlemen and Ladies passe a whole night, nay many nights together at cards and chesse, (and is there any attention more dull and melancholy then that?) and yet worldlings say not a word, friends never trouble themselves at that; but for one hours meditation, or rising in the morning a little earlier then ordinary to prepare our selves to communion, every one runs to the Physician to cure us of hypochondriack humours, and the jaundise: we may spend thirty nights in dancing and none complains of it; but for watching one Christmas night every one coughs, and cries out of his belly the next morning. Who seeth not that the world is an unjust judge, favourable and partiall to its own children, sharp and rigorous to the children of God?

3. We can never be upon good termes with the world but in casting our selves away with it; it is impossible for us to content it, it is too fantastical. *John came neither eating nor drinking,* (saith our Saviour) *and ye say the diuel is in him:*

him : *The son of man came eating and drinking, and ye say, behold a glutton, and a drinker of wine.* It is most true, Philothea, if we comply with the world, and give our selves a liberty to laugh, to dance, and to play with it, it will be scandalized; if we do not so it will accuse us of hypocrisie or melancholy : If we make our selves brave, the world will interpret it to some ill end ; if we be carelessly clad, it will account us mean and abject spirits : Our mirth will be called dissolution ; our mortification sullenness : and looking upon us with a malicious eye we can never be acceptable to it. It aggravateth our imperfections, publishing them for sins ; our venial sins it maketh mortal, and those of frailty it raises to sins of malice. Where charity is benigne, (as **S. Paul** saith) the world is malicious ; where charity judgeth ill of none, the world on the contrary judgeth ill of all ; and not being able to accuse our actions it accuses our intentions. So that have the sheep horns or no, be they white or black, the wolf will not spare to devour them if he can.

4. Do what we can the world will still oppose us : if we be long at confession, it will wonder how we can have so much to say ; if we stay but a while, it will

will say we have not confest all ; it will observe all our motions, and for one only little word of choler it will protest that we are insupportable : the care of our affaires will seem to it coverousnesse, and our meeknesse sillinesse. But as for the children of the world, their choler is generosity, their avarice is good husbandry, their familiarities honourable entertainment : the spiders alwaies destroy the work of the Bees.

5. Let us let alone this blind world, Philothea, let it cry as long as it will, like an owle to disquiet the birds of the day : let us be firm in our designs, constant in our resolutions ; our perseverance will demonstrate whether it be in good earnest that we have sacrificed our selves to God, and reduced our selves to a devout life. Comets and Planets are almost of an equal brightnesse in appearance ; but comets soon vanish away being but flying fires, whereas planets have a lasting clearnesse : so hypocrisie and true virtue have great resemblance in shew, but one is easily known from the other ; because hypocrisie lasteth not long, vanishing like smoke, but true virtue is alwaies firm and constant.

6. It is no small help towards the securing of our devotion to suffer reproaches and

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and calummie in the beginning of it, for by that means we avoid the danger of pride and vain-glory, which are like the Midwives of Egypt, appointed by the infernal Pharao to kill the male children of the Israelites the very day of their birth. We are crucified to the world, let the world be crucified to us: it accounts us fooles, let us esteem it mad.

# CHAP. II.

*That we must alwaies have a good courage.*

I. **L**ight, though it be most beautiful and delectable to our eyes, dazels them notwithstanding after they have been long in darknesse. Before we be grown familiar with the Inhabitants of any Countrey, let them be never so courteous and friendly, yet we find our selves somewhat strange amongst them. It may be, Philothea, that upon this change of life divers reluctations will arise in thy heart, and that this great and general farewell, which thou hast given to the follies and vanities of the world, will cause in thee some sadnesse and discouragement. If that happen, have a little patience I pray thee, for it will come to nothing, it is but a little strangenesse which novelty brings thee, let that passe over, and thou shalt receive

receive a million of consolations.

2. It will trouble thee at first (it may be) to forsake that glory which fooles and flatterers gave thee in thy vanities ; but wouldest thou loose that eternity of true glory which God will give thee ? The vain trifles and pastimes in which thou hast employed thy former years, will present themselves again to thy heart to intice it, and to cause it to return to them ; but canst thou renounce this blessed eternity for such deceitful trash ? Believe me, if thou persevere thou wilt quickly finde such cordial sweetnesse , so pleasant and delicious, that thou wilt confesse that the world hath nothing but gall in comparison of this honey, and that one day of devotion is better worth then a thousand years of a wordly life.

3. But thou seest that the mountaine of Christian perfection is exceeding high : O my God (saist thou) how shall I be able to climbe it up ? Courage, Philothea. When the little young bees begin to take shape, we call them nymphs, and then they cannot flie to the sweet flowers, nor to the hills and neighbouring mountains to gather honey: but by little and little, feeding upon the honey which the old ones prepare for them, these little young ones get wings  
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and strengthen themselves, so that afterwards they flie to gain their living all over the countrey. It is true, we are now but little bees in devotion, and not able to flye up so high as we desire, which is even to the height of Christian perfection; but yet we begin to take shape by our desires and resolutions, and our wings begin to grow: we must then hope that we shall be one day spiritual bees, and able to flie; in the mean time let us live upon the honey of so many good instructions as ancient devout persons have left us, and pray God to give us wings like a dove, that we may not onely flie during the time of this present life, but also rest in the Eternity of that to come.

### CHAP. III.

*Of the nature of Tentations, and the difference between feeling them and consenting to them.*

I. **F**igure to thy self, Philothea, a young Princess extremely beloved of her husband, and that some wicked man (to seduce her, & defile her marriage bed) sends her some infamous messenger of love to treat with her about his mischievous design: first, this messenger proposeth to the Princess the intent of his master; secondly, the Princess approves or disapproves the proposition

position and message ; thirdly, she either consenteth or refuseth. So the world, the flesh, and the devil, seeing a soul espoused to the son of God, send their temptations and suggestions , by which, first, sinne is propounded to her ; secondly, she is either pleased or displeased with the motion ; thirdly, she either consents or refuses: which are in summ the three steps to descend to wickednesse; temptation, delectation , and consent. And though these three actions are not so manifestly discerned in other kinds of sins , yet are they palpably seen in all great and enormous sins.

2. Though the temptation of any sin whatsoever should last all our life, it could not make us unpleasing to the Divine Majestie, so that it delight us not, and that we give no consent to it : the reason is , because in temptation we are not active but passive , and since we take no pleasure in it we can have no guilt of it. S. Paul suffered a long time the temptations of the flesh, and yet was so far from being unpleasing to God for it , that on the contrary God was glorified thereby. The blessed S. Angela de Fulgino felt such vehement temptations of the flesh, that she moveth to compassion when she relates them. Great likewise were the temptations

tations which S. Francis, and S Benner suffered, when the one cast himself naked into the thornes, and the other into the snow to mitigate them; yet they lost nothing of the grace of God for all that, but augmented it.

3. Thou must then be very couragious, Philothea, amidst temptations, and never yield thy self as vanquished so long as they displease thee. Observe well the difference between feeling and consenting to temptation; which is, that we may feel them though they displease us, but we can never consent to them unlesse they please us, since pleasure ordinarily serveth as a step to consent. Let then the enemies of our salvation present to us as many baits as they will, let them wait alwaies at the door of our heart to get in, let them make us as many provocations as they list; but as long as we have a resolution to take no pleasure in all that, it is not possible that we can offend God, no more then the Prince, husband to the Princess which I have represented, can be displeased with her for the message sent to her, if she have taken no pleasure in it. Yet there is this difference between the soul and this Princess in this particular, that the Princess having heard the unchast proposition, may if she please drive away the messen-

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ger, and hear him no more: but it is not alwaies in the power of the soul not to feel temptation, though it be alwaies in her power not to consent to it; for which cause, although the temptation should last and persevere a long time, yet can it not annoy us so long as it displeaseth us.

4. But as for the delectation which may follow temptation, for as much as there are two parts of our soul, the one inferiour, and the other superiour, and the inferiour followeth not alwaies the superiour, but acts by it self, it happens oftentimes that the inferiour part taketh delight in the temptation without the consent, nay against the will of the superiour. This is the dispute, and the war which the Apostle S. Paul describeth, when he saith that his flesh rebelled against his spirit, that there is a law of the members, and a law of the spirit, and such other things.

5. Hast thou ever seen (Philothea) a great fire-coal covered with ashes? who so cometh ten or twelve houres after to seek fire, finds none but a little in the midst of the hearth, and that very hard to be found, yet there it was, since there it is found; and with it all the other coals already dead are kindled. It is just so  
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with charity, which is our spiritual life, amongst great and violent temptations : For temptation casting her delectation into the inferiour part, covereth all the soul (as it seemeth) with ashes, and reduces the love of God into a narrow room, for it appeareth not any where but in the midst of the heart, in the center of the spirit ; and yet it seems not to be there, and we have much ado to find it, but there it is, since howsoever all may be in disorder in our soul and in our body, yet we retain a resolution never to consent to sin nor temptation; and the delectation which pleaseth the outward man displeaseth the inward, so that though it incompasse our will yet it is not within it : by which we see that such delectation is contrary to the will, and being so can be no sin.

#### CHAP. IV.

*Two good examples upon this subject.*

1. **I**T concerns thee so nearly to understand this well, that I will spare no labour to explicate it more at large. The young man, (of whom S. Hierome speaketh) who being laid most delicately in silk upon a soft bed, was provoked by all sorts of unclean touches and instigations of a lascivious woman, who lay with him of purpose to stagger his constancy, must he not

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needs feel strange motions of the flesh? his senses must they not be seized with delectation, and his imagination extremely possess'd with the presence of those voluptuous objects? yes doubtlesse: and yet amongst so many troubles, in the midst of such a terrible storm of temptations, and so many lusts which encompass'd him, he testified sufficiently that his heart was not overcome, and that his will gave no consent; for his spirit perceiving so general a rebellion against it, and he having no part of his body at command but his tongue, he bit it off with his teeth, and spit it in the face of that filthy woman, who tormented his soul more cruelly by her lust, then all the executioners could ever have done by the greatest torments; for the tyrant, despairing to vanquish him by pains, thought to overcome him by these pleasures.

2. The history of the combat of S. Catherine of Siena in such an occasion is very admirable, the substance of it followeth. The devil had permission from God to assault the chastity of this holy Virgin with the greatest fury that he could, with this exception that he should not touch her. He presented then all kind of unchaste suggestions to her heart; and to move her the more, coming with his companions in  
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form of men and women, he committed a thousand kinds of immodesties & uncleannesses in her sight, adding most obscene words and invitations. And although all these things were exteriour, neverthelesse by means of the senses they pierced deep into the heart of the Virgin, which (as her self confessed) was even brim full of them, so that nothing remained free but onely the mere superiour will, which was not shaken with this tempest of uncleannesse and carnal delectation. And this lasted very long, till one day our Saviour appearing to her, she said unto him; Where wert thou, my sweet Saviour, when my heart was so full of so great darknesse and uncleannesse? and he answered; I was within thy heart, my daughter: And how (replied she) couldest thou dwell in my heart where there was so much impurity? canst thou dwell then in such unclean places? And our Saviour said; tell me, did these thoughts of thy heart bring thee pleasure or sadnesse; bitternesse or delight? most extreme bitternesse and sorrow, said she: And our Saviour replied, who was it then that put this exceeding bitternesse and sorrow into thy heart but I that lay there hidden in the midst of thy soul? Believe me, daughter, had I not been there present, these thoughts which surrounded thy

will and could not prevail, had doubtlesse overcome it and entred in, and had been received by thy free will, and so had brought death to thy soul. But because I was within, I armed thy heart with this bitternesse and this resistance; by which it opposed the temptation as much as it could, and not being able to perform what it desired, conceived a vehement displeasure and deadly hatred against temptation, and against it self: and so these troubles were a great merit and advantage to thee, and an exceeding increase of thy virtue and courage.

3. Seest thou, Philothea, how this fire was covered with ashes? and that temptation and delight were even entred into the heart, and had incompassed the will, which onely assisted by her Saviour, made resistance by griefs, by displeasures, and detestations of the evil suggested to her, constantly refusing her consent to the sinne which besieged her? O what distresse is it to a soul that loveth God, not so much as to know whether he be in her or no; or whether the divine love for which she fighteth, be altogether extinguished in her or no! but this is the sweetest flower of the perfection of heavenly love, to make the lover suffer and fight for love, not knowing whether he have that love for which, and by which he fights.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*An encouragement to a soul in temptation.*

1. **T**Hese assaults and strong temptations, Philothea, are never permitted by God, but against those soules which he means to elevate to his pure and excellent love: yet it followes not that after all that they shall be sure to attain to it; for it happens oftentimes that those which have been constant in violent assaults, afterward not corresponding faithfully with the grace of God, are overcome with very small temptations. This I say, to the end that if thou chance at any time to be afflicted with so great temptations, thou mayst know that God favours thee with an extraordinary grace, by which he declareth that he will exalt thee in his sight; and that nevertheless thou mayst be alwaies humble and timorous, not assuring thy self to be able to overcome small temptations after thou hast prevailed against great ones, saving only by continual fidelity towards his Majesty.

2. What temptations soever then shall happen to thee, and what delectation soever follow upon them, so long as thy will shall refuse her consent both to the

temptation and to the delectation, trouble not thy self by no means, for God is not offended with thee. When a man is in a trance, so that there appears no signe of life in him, they usually lay their hands on his heart, and by the least motion they feel there they judge him alive, and that by means of some precious water or restorative he may return to his strength and sense: so it happens sometimes that by the violence of temptations our soul seemeth to be fallen into an utter decay of all her forces, that as in a trance she hath no more spiritual life nor motion; but if we will know in what state she is, let us lay our hand on our heart, let us consider if the heart and will do yet retain their spiritual motion, that is, if they do their duty in refusing to consent and comply with the temptation and delectation; for so long as this motion of refusal is in our heart, we may be assured that charity, the life of our soul, remaineth yet in us, and that Jesus Christ our Saviour is there present, though hidden and secretly; so that by vertue of continual prayer, of the Sacraments, and of confidence in God, we shall recover our forces, and live a secure and delectable life.

## C H A P. V I.

*How Temptation, and Delectation may  
be sin.*

1. **T**He Princeſſe, of whom we have ſpoken, could not hinder the diſhoneſt ſuit made to her, becauſe (as we have preſuppoſed) it happened to her againſt her will: but if on the contrary ſhe had by any inticements given encouragement to ſuch a motion, in ſhewing a willingneſſe to correſpond with him that courted her, doubtleſſe ſhe would have been guilty of the motion it ſelf; and though ſhe might diſſemble it, ſhe would nevertheleſſe deſerve blame and puniſhment. So happens it ſometimes that temptation alone brings us into ſinne, becauſe we are the cauſe of it. For example; I know that in playing I fall eaſily into fury and blaſphemy, and that gaming ſerves me as a temptation to thoſe ſins; I ſin therefore as often as I play, and am guilty of the temptation which ſhall happen to me in play. Again, if I know certainly that any ones converſation brings me into temptation and danger, and yet I go willingly into it, I am doubtleſſe guilty of all the temptations which I ſhall receive there.

2. When the delectation which proceedeth from the temptation may be  
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avoided, it is alwaies a sin to receive it; which sin is great or little according as the pleasure which we take in it, and the consent which we give to it is great or little, or of long or short continuance. It is alwaies a thing reprehensible in the young Princeesse, of whom we spake, not only to hearken to the immodest and impure proposition made to her, but also after that she hath heard it to take pleasure in it, entertaining her heart with contentment upon this object. For although she will not consent to the real execution of what is proposed to her, she consents notwithstanding in the interior compliance of her heart, by the contentment which she taketh. And it is alwaies impurity to apply either heart or body to any dishonest object: nay impurity consists so much in the application of the heart, that without it the applying of the body can be no sin at all.

3. When thou shalt then be tempted by any sin, consider whether thou hast willingly given occasion to the temptation, for then the temptation it self putterh thee in state of sin, by reason of the hazard to which thou hast exposed thy self; and that is to be understood when thou mightest commodiously have avoided the occasion, and that thou didst foresee, or mightest

mightest have foreseen the coming of the temptation. But if thou hast given no occasion to the temptation, it can be in no sort impured to thee for a sin.

4. When the delectation following the temptation might have been shunned, and yet we have not avoided it, there is alwaies some kind of sin, according to the time we continue, and the cause of the delectation which we have taken in it. A woman who hath given no occasion to be courted, yet takes pleasure therein, ceases not to be blameable, though the pleasure she takes therein have no other cause then the courting. For example; if the gallant who sues to her play exactly well upon the Lute, and she takes pleasure, not in the love he makes, but in the harmony and sweetnesse of his Lute, there is no sin in that; yet she ought not to continue long in this pleasure, for fear she passe from that to a delectation in being wooed. Likewise if any one propound to me some stratagem full of invention and cunning to take revenge upon mine enemy, and that I take no delight nor give any consent to the revenge which is proposed, but only in the subtilty of the invention, without doubt I sin not; though it be not expedient that I continue long in this delight, for fear lest by little and little it might

might induce me to a delectation of the revenge it self.

5. We are sometimes surpris'd with some tickling of delectation which immediately followes the temptation before we are well aware of it ; and that can be but a light venial sin, which growes greater, if after we perceive the danger we are in we negligently loose time in considering whether we should admit or reject that delectation ; and the sin increases yet more, if being aware of the delectation, we dwell in it some time by mere negligence, without any purpose to reject it : but when voluntarily and of set purpose we resolve to please our selves in that delectation, this very deliberate purpose is a great sin, if the object of the delectation be notoriously evil. It is a great vice in a woman to be willing to entertain dishonest loves, although she will never really yield her self to her lovers.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Remedies against great temptations.*

1. **AS** soon as thou findest thy self in any temptation, do as little children when they see a Wolf or a Bear in the field ; for presently they run into their fathers or mothers armes, or at least call them to their help and succour. Runne thou

thou in like manner to God, imploring his mercy and assistance: it is the remedy which our Saviour himself taught us, saying; *Pray lest you enter into temptation.* If thou find the temptation notwithstanding this, to continue or increase, hasten in spirit to embrace the holy Crosse, imagining thou seest our Saviour Jesus Christ crucified thereon; protest that thou wilt never consent to the temptation, and demand aid against it, and continue alwayes protesting not to consent so long as the temptation shall last.

2. But in making these protestations and refusals of consent, look not the temptation in the face, but look only upon our blessed Saviour: for if thou look upon the temptation, principally when it is strong, it may shake thy courage. Diversify thy mind with some good and commendable exercises, for such exercises entering and taking place in thy heart will chase away the evil temptations and suggestions.

3. The sovereign remedy against all temptations, great or small, is to lay open our heart, and communicate the suggestions, apprehensions, and affections which we have, to our spirituall directour. For observe well, that the first condition the devil

devill makes with a soul whom he would seduce is to be silent; as they do who would deceive maids or women, at the very first they forbid them to communicate the proposition to their Parents or husbands: whereas God on the other side in his inspirations, requires above and before all things that we make them known to our superiours and conductours.

4. If after all this the temptation continue obstinately to vex and persecute us, we have nothing to do but on our part to persevere as obstinately in our protestation that we will never consent to it: for as maidens can never be married so long as they say no; so the soul although she may be troubled, yet she can never be prejudiced so long as she saith no.

5. Dispute not with thy enemy, never answer him one word, unlesse it be that which our Saviour answered, where-with he confounded him; *Away Sathan, the Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him onely shalt thou serve.* As a chaste woman should not answer one word, nor look once in the face of that wicked person who solicits her to dishonestie, but cutting him off short, should at the instant turn her heart towards her husband, and confirm the loyaltie which she hath vowed to him without entring into dispute with the others:

other : so the devout soul assaulted by any temptation, ought by no means to loose time in disputing or answering, but resolutely to turn herself towards Jesus Christ her spouse, and renew her protestation of fidelitie, to remain solely and intirely his for ever.

### CHAP. VIII.

*That we must resist small temptations.*

1. **A**Lthough we must fight against great temptations with an invincible courage, and that the victorie gained against them be extremely profitable, yet it may happen that we may profit more in resisting small temptations : for as great temptations exceed in qualitie, so the lesser infinitely exceed in number, so that the victory over them may be equall to that over the great. Wolves and Bears are without doubt more dangerous then flies ; yet do they not vex and importune us so much, nor exercise our patience so often. It is an easie thing to abstain from murder, but hard to avoid small cholerick passions, of which occasions are presented to us every moment. It is easie for a man or a woman to refrain from adulterie, but it is not so easie to abstain from wanton looks, from giving or receiving occasions  
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of love, from procuring little foolish favours, from speaking and hearing flattering words. It is easie not to admit a corivall with the husband or wife as to the bodie, but not so easie as to the heart; very easie to refrain from defiling the marriage bed, but very uneasie not to prejudice the marriage love; very easie to forbear stealing other mens goods, but hard not so much as to covet or desire them; verie easie not to bear false witnesse in judgement, but uneasie not to lie in conversation; very easie not to be drunk, but hard to be sober; verie easie not to desire another mans death, but hard not to desire some inconvenience to him; easie to forbear defaming our adversarie, but hard not to despise him.

2. In a word, these little temptations of choler, of suspicion, of jealousy, of envie, of fond love, of immodestie, of dissimulation, of affectation, of cunning, of unchast thoughts, are continuall vexations to those who are most devout and resolute. We must therefore prepare our selves, my dear Philothea, with great care and diligence to this spiritual combat: and assure our selves, that as many victories as we shall winn over these petty enemies, so many precious stones shall be put into the crown of glory which God hath  
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prepared for us in heaven. Therefore I say, if we mean to fight valiantly against greater temptations when they come, we must well & diligently defend our selves against these small and weak assaults.

## CHAP. IX.

*Remedies against these small temptations.*

1. **N**OW concerning these small temptations of vanitie, suspicion, anxietie, jealousy, envie, fond loves, and such trifles, which like flies and gnats hover before our eyes, & sometimes sting us upon the cheek, sometimes upon the nose, because it is impossible to be altogether free from their importunitie, the best resistance we can make, is not to vex our selves for them; for they cannot hurt us, though they trouble us, so that we be thoroughly resolved to serve God.

2. Despise then petty assaults, and vouchsafe not so much as to think upon that which they suggest; let them buzze about thine ears as long as they will, and fly round about thee here and there like flies, and when they begin to sting and that thou shalt see them alight upon thy heart, do nothing but meerly remove them, not fighting against them, nor answering them, but performing some actions contrary to them



them whatsoever they be, and especially of the love of God. For if thou wilt believe me, thou shalt not strive too much to oppose the virtue contrarie to the temptation which thou feelest, because that would be as it were to dispute with it; but having performed onely one action of some virtue directly contrarie to the temptation, ( if thou hast had leasure to inform thy self of the qualitie of the temptation ) turn thy heart quietly towards Jesus Christ crucified, and by an act of love towards him kisse his sacred feet. This is the best means to conquer our enemy, as well in little as in great temptations: for the love of God, containing in it self the perfections of all virtues, ( and far more excellently then the virtues themselves ) is a more soveraign remedie against all vices. And thy mind accustoming it self in all temptations to recurr to this generall rendezvous, shall not need to examine what temptations it hath, but feeling her self troubled, will without further pain quiet her self in this generall remedie; which besides is so terrible to our ghostly enemy, that when he once sees that his temptations provoke us to this divine love, he ceases to raise more. And thus much concerning small and frequent temptations, wherewith whosoever shall trouble himself more particularly

ricularly shall spend his time without profit.

## CHAP. X.

*How to strengthen our heart against temptations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER from time to time what passions reign most in thy soul, and having discovered them, take a course of life clean contrarie to them in thought, word, and deed. For example, if thou find thy self inclined to the passion of vanitie, think often upon the miserie of this mortall life, how anxious these vanities will be to our conscience at the houre of our death, how unworthy they are of a generous heart, that they are but trifles, and babes for little children, and such like considerations. Speak also earnestly and often against vanitie; and although it seem to be against thy heart, cease not to despise it for by this means thou shalt in a manner ingage thyself in reputation to the contrary virtue; and by much speaking against a thing we come to hate it, though at first we loved it. Exercise works of humilitie and abjection as much as thou canst, even against thy inclination; for so thou shalt quickly get a habit of humilitie, and weaken thy vanitie in such sort, as when the temptation shall happen thy inclination will not be able to  
take

take part with it, and so thou wilt have more strength to resist it.

2. If thou art inclined to covetousnesse, think often upon the folly of this vice, which rendreth us slaves to that which was created to serve us; think how at our death we must forsake all, and leave it in the hands of those that will scatter it away, and to whom it may be cause of ruine and damnation: speak much against Avarice, and praise the contempt of the world: inforce thy self oftentimes to give aimes, and do works of charitie, and let slip some opportunitie of gain.

3. If thou be subject to give or receive fond love, think how dangerous this folly is, as well to thy self as to others: Consider what an unworthie thing it is to prophane and imploy idly the noblest affection of our soul, how worthy it is to be blamed as extreme lightnesse of spirit: Speak often in praise of chastitie and puritie of heart, and conform thy actions as near as thou canst to thy discourse, avoiding all fondnesse and affectation.

4. To be brief, in time of peace, that is, when the temptations of those sins to which thou art most subject do not trouble thee, do many acts of the contrarie virtues: and if occasions do not present themselves seek some; for by this means  
will

will thy heart be armed against future temptations.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Of Unquietnesse.*

I. **U**Nquietnesse is not a simple temptation, but a spring from which and by which many other temptations are derived. I will then speak something of it. Sadnesse is nothing but a sorrow of mind, conceived for some inconvenience which we suffer against our will, whether it be outward as povertie, sicknesse, contempt, or inward as ignorance, want of devotion, repugnance, temptation. When the soul then findeth that she hath some disease, she is grieved at it, and that is sadnesse; and presently she desireth to be freed from it, and to find means to disburthen her self; and hitherto she hath reason, for we naturally desire that which is good, and flie from that which we believe to be evill. If the soul seek means to be freed from this evill for the love of God, she will seek them with patience, meeknesse, humility, and tranquillity, expecting her deliverance more from the providence and goodnesse of God, then from her own industry, labour, and diligence: but if she desire ease for love of her self, then will she heat and tire her self in seeking those means of her deliverance,

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as though this blessing depended more upon her self then upon God : I say not that she thinks so, but that she vexes her self as if she thought so. And if she meet not suddenly with that which she desireth, then she falls into great unquietnes and impatience which not curing but rather increasing the former disease, the soule entereth into anguish, distresse, and such faintness, and losse of all courage that she growes desperate of her cure. Thou seest then that sadness, which in the beginning was just, afterwards begets unquietness, and unquietness an increase of sadness, which is extreamely dangerous.

2. Unquietness is the greatestt evill that can come to the soule excepting sinne. For as seditions and ciuill distords of a Common wealth ruine it intirely, and disable it to resist a stranger : so our heart being troubled and disquieted in it selfe, looseth strength to maintaine the vertues which it had gained, and with it the meanes to resist the temptations of the enemy, who at that time vseth all kind of endeavours to fish (as they say) in troubled waters.

3. Unquietness proceedeth from an inordinate desire to be delivered from the evill which we suffer, or to obtain the good which we desire : and yet nothing more increases the evill, nor hinders the good  
then

then unquietness and vexation. Birds remaine taken in the nets and snares, because finding themselves engaged, they flutter and strive to get loose, and by that meanes entangle themselves the more. When thou shalt then earnestly desire to be freed from any evill, or to obtain any good, first set thy mind at rest and peace, and settle thy judgement and will; and then faire and softly endeavour to purchase thy desire, taking in order the means which shall be convenient for it. And when I say faire and softly, I mean not negligently, but without vexation, trouble, and unquietness; otherwise, instead of obtaining the effect of thy desire, thou wilt spoyle all, and more entangle thy self.

4. *My soule is always in my hands, o Lord, and I have not forgotten thy Law*, sayed David. Examine more then once every day, at least morning and evening whether some passion or unquietness hath robbed thee of it. Consider whether thou have thy heart at commandement, or whether it be not escaped out of thy hands, to engage it selfe in some inordinate affection of love, hatred, envie, covetousness, feare, joy, sadness: and if it be strayed seeke it presently, and bring it back gently to the presence of God, subjecting thy affections and desires to the obedience and direction of his divine pleasure.

pleasure. For as they that fear to loose any thing which is pretious to them, keep it fast in their hand : so in imitation of this great King, we should always say, O my God, my soul is in danger, and therefore I carry it alwayes in my hand ; and in this manner I have not forgotten thy holy Law.

5. Permit not thy desires, be they never so little, and of never so small importance, to disquiet thee : for after little ones those that are greater and more important will find thy heart more disposed to trouble or disorder. When thou perceivest unquietness to come, commend thy selfe to God, and resolve to do nothing at all of that which thy desire demands, untill that disquiet be intirely passed, unlesse it be something that cannot be differred, and then thou must by some gentle and quiet meanes stopp the current of thy affection, tempering and moderating it as much as is possible : and then do that which is required, not according to thy desire but according to reason.

6. If thou canst discover thy unquietness to him that governs thy soul, or at least to some trusty and devout friend, doubt not but presently thou shalt find redress ; for communicating of the griefs of our heart worketh the same effect in the soul, that letting blood doth in the body, of him  
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that is in a continual feaver: and this is the remedy of remedies. So holy King Lewis gave this counsel to his sonne: *If thou hast any trouble in thy heart, tell it presently to thy Confessour, or to some good friend, and thou shalt bear thy grief very easily by the comfort that he will give thee.*

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of Sadnesse.*

1. *Sadnesse that is according to God (saith S. Paul) worketh repentance to salvation; but sadnesse of the world worketh death.* Sadnesse then may be good or evil, according to the sundry effects which it worketh in us. It is true that it produceth more evil then good ones: for it hath but two that are good, mercy, and repentance; and six that are evil, anxiety, sloth, indignation, jealousy, envy, and impatience: which caused the wise man to say, *Sorrow killeth many, and there is no profit in it; because for two good streames which flow from the spring of sadnesse, there are six very evil.*

2. The enemy makes use of sadnesse to exercise his temptations against the just; for as he endeavours to make the wicked rejoyce in their sins, so he labours to make the good sorrowful in their good works.

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And as he can never procure evil to be committed but by making it seem pleasant ; so can he not divert us from goodness but by making it appear unpleasant. He taketh delight in sadness and melancholy because he is so himself, and so shall be eternally; therefore desires he that every one should be like himself.

3. This mischievous sadness troubles the soul, puts it into disquiet, brings inordinate fears, giveth a distaste of prayer, dulls the brain, depriveth the soul of counsel, resolution, judgment, and courage, and ruins her strength. To be short, it is like a hard winter that mowes away all the beauty of the field, and devoures all living creatures: for it ravishes all sweetness from the soul, and renders her lame and impotent in all her powers. If thou chance to be assaulted with this dangerous sadness, Philothea, practise the remedies following.

4. *Is any one sad* (saith S. James) *let him pray.* Prayer is a sovereign remedy, for it lifteth up the soul to God, who is our onely joy and consolation. But in praying use affections and words either inward or outward, which tend to confidence and the love of God; as, *O God of mercy, most bountiful God, my sweet Saviour, O God of my heart, my joy, my hope,*  
my

*my dear spouse, the well beloved of my soul:*  
and such like.

5. Resist vigorously the inclinations of sadness: and although it seem to thee that all which thou doest at that time be performed coldly, heavily, and loosely, yet omit nothing of it; for the enemy who pretends to make us weary of good works by sadness, seeing that we cease not to do them, and that being done with repugnance they are more meritorious, forbears to afflict us any more.

6. Sing spiritual songs; for the devil hath often ceased his endeavours by this means; witnesse the evil spirit that afflicted or possessed Saul, whose violence was repressed by such singing. It is good to busie our selves in exteriour employments, and vary them as much as we can, so to divert our mind from the sad object; to purifie and heat the spirits, sadness being a passion of a dry and cold complexion.

7. Perform external actions of love although without delight, embracing the crucifix, holding it close to thy brest, kissing the feet and hands of it, lifting thy eyes and hands to heaven, ejaculating thy voyce to God by such words of love and confidence as follow: *My welbeloved is mine, and I am his. My welbeloved is*

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a posie of myrrhe, he shall dwell between my breasts. Mine eyes do melt into tears to thee, O my God, saying, when wilt thou comfort me? O Jesus, be Jesus to me. Live sweet Jesus, and my soul will live. Who can separate me from the love of God? and such like.

8. Moderate disciplines are good against sadnesse; because this voluntary outward affliction obtaines inward consolation, and the soul feeling pain from without diverterth her self from those which are within. Frequenting also the holy communion is excellent; for that heavenly bread strengthneth the heart, and rejoiceth the spirit.

9. Discover all apprehensions, affections, and suggestions which proceed from thy sadnesse, humbly and faithfully to thy guide and Confessor. Seek the company of spiritual persons, and frequent them as much as thou canst during the time of thy sadnesse. And last of all resign thy self up to the hands of God, preparing thy self to suffer this troublesome sadnesse patiently, as a just punishment of thy vain mirth and pastimes: and doubt not at all but God, after he shall have tryed thee, will deliver thee from this evil.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Of spiritual and sensible consolations, and  
how we must behave our selves  
in them.*

1. **G**OD continueth the existence of this great world in a perpetual changeable course of Night into Day, Spring into Sommer, Sommer into Autumn, Autumn into Winter, and Winter into Spring again: and one day is never perfectly like another; some are cloudy, some rainy, some dry, some windy; a variety, which gives exceeding beauty to the world. It is the same with man, who, according to the saying of the ancients, is an abridgement of the world, or another little world: for he is never in the same estate; his life glides upon the earth, like the waters floating and waving in a perpetual diversity of motion, which sometimes exalt him with hope, sometimes humble him with fear, sometimes carry him to the right hand with consolations, sometimes to the left with afflictions; and not one of his dayes, no not one of his houres is in all points like another.

2. This is a necessary admonition: That we must endeavour to have a continual and inviolable equality of heart in so great an inequality of occurrences. And

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although

although all things turn and change variously about us, yet must we stand constantly immoveable, alwaies looking and aspiring towards our God. Let the Ship take what course soever, let it sayl towards the East, West, North, or South, what wind soever carries it, never will the needle of the compasse look any other way then towards the fair pole-starre. Let all turn upside down, not onely round about us, but even within us; that is, let our soul be sorrowful or joyful, let it be in sweetnesse or bitternesse, in peace or trouble, in light or in darknesse, in temptation or repose, in pleasure or displeasure, barren or fruitful, let the sun burn it, or the dew refresh it; yet alwaies must the needle of our heart, our mind, our superior will (which is our Compasse) look incessantly, and tend continually towards the love of God our Creatour, Saviour, and only and soveraign good. *whether we live or dye* (saith the Apostle) *we belong to God*: and, *Who shall be able to separate us from the love of God*? No, nothing shall ever separate us from this love; neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor death, nor life; nor the present pains, nor the fear of future accidents, nor the subtilty of evil spirits, nor the height of consolations, nor the depth of afflictions,

nor

nor fruitfulness, nor barrenness of heart, ought ever to separate us from this holy charity founded in Christ Jesus.

3. This absolute resolution never to forsake God nor abandon his sweet love, serveth as a counterpoise to our soules, to keep them in a holy indifferency amidst the inequality of divers motions which the condition of this life brings them. For as little bees surprized by the wind in the fields embrace small stones, that they may be able to ballance themselves in the ayr, and not be so easily abandoned to the mercy of the storm; so our soul, having by resolution vigorously embraced the precious love of God, continues constant in the midst of the inconstancy and mutability of consolations & afflictions as well spiritual as temporal, interior as exterior. But besides this general doctrine, we have need of some particular documents.

4. I say then that Devotion consists not in the gentleness, softness, comfort, or sensible tenderness of the heart, which provoketh us to tears and sighs, and giveth us a kind of delight and savoury satisfaction in some spiritual exercises. No, dear Philothea, Devotion and that are not the same thing: for many souls have this tenderness and consolation which nevertheless are very vicious, and consequently have not

any true love of God, much lesse any true devotion. Saul persecuting to death poor David, who fled from him into the wilderness of Engaddi, entred all alone into a cave where David and his people lay hidden : David who in this occasion might have killed Saul a thousand times, spared his life, and would not so much as put him in fear ; but having suffered him to go forth at his pleasure, called after him to declare his innocencie, and to let him know that he had been at his mercy. Now hereupon what did Saul leave undone to shew that his heart was mollified towards David ? he called him his child, wept out aloud, praised him, confessed his meeknesse, prayed to God for him, foretold his future greatnesse, and commended his posteritie to him. What greater sweetnesse and tendernesse of heart could he make shew of ? and yet for all that he had not changed his heart, neither did he cease to persecute David as cruelly as before. So there are some persons, who considering the goodnesse of God, and the passion of our Saviour, feel great tendernesse of heart, which forceth them to sigh, to weep, pray, and give thanks with such sense as that one would say their heart were possessed with deep devotion ; but when this comes to the proof, we find that as the sudden showers of a hot summer

mer falling in great drops upon the earth and not piercing it, serve for nothing but to produce mushrooms; even so these tears and this tenderneſſe, falling upon a vicious heart and piercing it not, become altogether unprofitable. For notwithstanding all this, theſe poor ſouls part not from a farthing of their evill gotten goods, renounce not one of their perverſe affections, nor would ſuffer the leaſt inconvenience in the world for the ſervice of our Saviour for whoſe ſake they wept. So that the good motions which they have had are nothing but ſpirituall mushrooms; which are not onely no true devotion but oftentimes great ſubtilties of the devill, who entertaining ſouls with theſe poor conſolations, makes them reſt contented and ſatiſfied with them, leaſt they ſhould ſearch farther for true and ſolid devotion, which conſiſts in a will conſtant, reſolute, active, and readie to put in execution whatſoever they know to be acceptable to God.

5. A child will weep tenderly when he ſees his mother pricked with a lance to be let bloud; but if his mother at the ſame time demand his apple or ſugar plums which he hath in his hand, he will by no means let them go. Such are the moſt part of our tender devotions; ſeeing the ſtroke of the lance which pierced the heart



of our Saviour crucified, we weep bitterly : alas ! Philothea, it is well done to lament this painfull death and passion of our Father, and Redeemer, but why then do we not give him in good earnest the apple which we have in our hands, and which he demandeth so earnestly, that is, our heart, the onely apple of love which our dear Saviour requireth of us ? why do we not resign so many pettie affections, delectations, and pleasures, which he would pull out of her hands and cannot, because they are our sugar plums, of which we are more fond then desirous of heavenly grace ? Ah, Philothea, these are friendships of little children, tender, but weak, fantastick, and fruitlesse. Devotion then consists not in such tender and sensible affections, which sometimes proceed from a pliant nature, capable of any impression that shall be given it, and sometimes from the enemy, who to amuse us stirs up our imagination to an apprehension fit for such effects.

6. Yet these soft and tender affections are sometimes very good and profitable; for they provoke the appetite of the soul, strengthen the spirit, and adde to the vigour of devotion a holy mirth and chearfulness, which renders our actions good and acceptable even in the exterior. This  
satisf-

satisfaction taken in heavenly things is that for which David cried out ; *O Lord, how sweet are thy words to my tast ? they are sweeter then honie to my mouth.* And certainly the least consolation of devotion which we receive is worth all the most excellent recreations of the world. The breasts and the milk, that is, the favours of the heavenly spouse, are sweeter to the soul then the most precious wine of earthly pleasures. He that once hath tasted them esteemeth all other consolations but gall and wormwood. As they that hold the herb Scitique in their mouth, receive such a sweetnesse from it that they feel neither hunger nor thirst : so they to whom God hath given this heavenly manna of inernall consolations, can neither desire nor receive the contentments of the world, at least to take pleasure, and entertain their affections in them. They are anticipations of the immortall delights which God gives to the souls that seek him ; they are the sugar plums which he gives to his little children to gain them ; they are the cordiall waters which he gives to strengthen them ; and many times they are pledges of eternall rewards.

7. They say that Alexander the Great sailing in the main sea, first discovered the happy land of Arabia by the smell of  
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the sweet odours which the wind brought him, and thereupon took great courage he and his companions : so oftentimes we receive these pleasures and sweetnesse in the sea of this mortall life, which doubtlesse makes us ghesse at the delights of the happy countrie of heaven, whereunto we all tend and aspire.

8. But thou wilt say, since there are sensible consolations which are good, and come from God, and that neverthelesse there are others unprofitable, dangerous, yea pernicious, which proceed either from nature, or from the enemy, how shall I discern the one from the other, and know the evill or unprofitable from those that are good ? It is a generall doctrine, Philothea, for all the passions and affections of our souls, that we must know them by their fruits : our hearts are trees, the affections and passions are the branches, works or actions are the fruits. The heart is good that hath good affections ; and the affections and passions are good which bring forth in us good effects, and holy actions. If this softnesse, this tendernesse, and these consolations make us more humble, patient, tractable, charitable, and compassionate towards our neighbour, more servent in mortifying our concupiscence and evill inclinations, more constant  
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in our exercises, more meek and pliable to those whom we ought to obey, more sincere in our lives, then without all doubt, Philothea, they are from God. But if these sweetnesse have no other contentment then for our selves, if they make us curious, peevish, stubborn, fierce, presumptuous, severe towards our neighbours, and esteeming our selves alreadie little Saints, disdaining to be any more subject to direction, doubtlesse they are false and pernicious consolations. A good tree brings forth none but good fruits.

9. When we shall have these tender-  
nesses and consolations, we must humble  
our selves profoundly before God: and  
let us take heed of saying, by reason of  
these comforts, *O how good am I!*  
No Philothea, these are good things  
that make us nothing at all the better;  
for I have said devotion consisteth not  
in them: but let us say, *O how good is  
God to such as hope in him, to the soul  
that seeketh him!* He that hath sugar in his  
mouth cannot say that his mouth is sweet,  
but that the sugar is sweet: so though the  
spirituall sweetnesse be verie good, and  
that God who giveth it to us is most  
good, yet it followeth not that he which  
receiveth them is good. 2. Let us ac-  
knowledge our selves as yet to be little  
children

children who have need of milk, that these sugar plums are given us because our spirit is yet tender, delicate, and hath need of baits and allurements to be inticed to the love of God. 3. But after that, speaking generally and ordinarily, let us receive these graces and favours humbly, esteeming them exceeding pretious, not so much because they are so in themselves, as that it is the hand of God which infuses them into our hearts; as a loving mother would do, who to flatter her child, putteth the sugar plums into his mouth with her own hand one by one, for if the child had wit, he would more esteem the sweetnesse of his mothers affection and tenderneſſe then that of the sugar plums. So it is much, Philothea, to have this sweetnesse; but it is the sweetnesse of all sweetnesse to consider that God with his loving and tender hand putteth them, as it were, into our mouthes, into our heart, our soul, and our mind. 4. Having thus received them humbly, let us imploy them carefully according to the intention of the giver. Wherefore, think we, doth God bestow this sweetnesse upon us? to make us sweet towards every one. The mother gives sugar plumes to her childe, to make him kilſe her: let us likewise kilſe our blessed Saviour who giveth us so much

much sweetnesse: now to kisse our Saviour is to obey him, to keep his commandments, to do his will, to follow his desires, in a word, to embrace him tenderly with obedience and loyalty. When therefore we shall receive any spirituall consolation, we must that day render our selves more diligent in good works and humility. 5. Besides all this, we must from time to time renounce such sweetnesse, tendernesse, and consolations, separating our heart from them, and protesting that although we accept them humbly, and esteem them because God sendeth them, and that they provoke us to his love, yet it is not these that we seek but God, and his holy love, not the comforts but the Comforter, not the sweetnesse but the sweet Saviour, not that tendernesse but him that is the sweetnesse of heaven and earth. And in this affection we ought to dispose our selves to persevere constantly in the holy love of God, although in all our life we should never taste of any consolation; and to say as well upon mount Calvary as upon mount Thabor, *O Lord, it is good for me to be with thee*, be thou upon the Crosse, or be thou in glory. 6. To conclude, I admonish thee, that if there shall happen to thee any great quantitie of such consolations, tendernesse, tears, and sweetnesse, or any

any extraordinary thing in them, thou conferr sincerely with thy spiritual conductour, and learn how to moderate and be- have thy self in them: for it is written, *Hast thou found honey? eat but as much of it as is sufficient.*

#### CHAP. XIV.

##### *Of spiritual drynesse and barrennesse.*

1. **T**HOU shalt then do as I have directed thee, dear Philothea, when thou shalt have such consolations. But this fair and pleasant weather will not last alwaies; it will happen sometimes that thou shalt be so destitute, and deprived of all sense of devotion, that thou wilt think thy soul a wild fruitlesse barren field, in which there is neither path nor way to find God, nor any dew of grace to refresh it, because of these droughts which seem to reduce her altogether to barrennesse. Alas! the poor soul in this state deserves compassion, and especially when this desolation is vehement; for then in imitation of David, she feedeth her self with teares night and day, while the enemy to cast her into despair, by a thousand suggestions mocks her, saying; Ah! poor soul, where is thy God? by what means canst thou find him? who shall ever restore to thee the joy of his holy grace?

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2. What wilt thou do at that time, Philothea? observe from whence this evil proceedeth: for oftentimes we our selves are the cause of our own drought and barrenness. 1. As a mother denies sugar to her child that is subject to the worms; so God taketh consolations from us when we take some vain pleasure in them, and are subject to the worms of presumption. *O my God, it is good for me that thou hast humbled me: Yes; for before I was humbled I did offend thee.* 2. When we neglect to gather the sweetness & delights of the love of God in due time, then in punishment of our slothfulness he removes them from us. The Israelite who gathered not Manna early in the morning could find none after sun-rising, for then was it all melted. 3. We are sometimes laid in the bed of sensual contentment and transitory comforts, as was the sacred spouse in the Canticles; the Bridegroom cometh and knocketh at the door of our heart, and inspireth us to return to our spiritual exercises, but we dally with him, because it troubleth us to forsake these scoleries, and to separate our selves from our false delights: For this cause he goes from us, and leaves us in our idleness: but afterwards when we would seek him out we must take great paines to find him; and deservedly, since we have been



been so unfaithful and disloyall to his love as to refuse it for worldly vanities. Ah! because thou hast yet of the flower of Egypt thou shalt have none of the Manna of heaven. Bees detest al kind of artificial odours; and the pleasures of the holy Ghost are incompatible with the sophisticated delights of the world.

3. The dissimulation and cunning used in confessions and spirituall communications which we make with our conductour, causes this drought and barrenesse: for since thou liest to the holy Ghost, no marvell if he deny thee his consolations. If thou wilt not be sincere and plain as a little child, thou shalt not have the sugar-plums of little children.

4. Thou hast glutted thy self with worldly contentments; no wonder then if spirituall delights be unfavoury to thee. Doves already satisfied (saith the ancient proverb) think cherries bitter. *He hath filled the hungry with good things,* (saith our blessed Lady) *and hath sent the rich away empty.* They that are rich in worldly treasures are not capable of spirituall ones.

5. Hast thou carefully preserved the fruits of consolations already received? then shalt thou receive new ones; for to him that hath more shall be given; and he that hath

hath not what was given to him, but by negligence hath lost it, even that he hath not shall be taken from him; that is, he shall be deprived of the favours and graces which were prepared for him. It is true, the rain reviveth the plants that have life, but from those who have none it taketh away that life which they have not, for it rotterh them altogether.

6. For many such causes do we lose comfort in devotion, and fall into barrennesse, and driness of spirit. Let us then examine our conscience whether we find in us any such fault. But note, Philothea, that this examination is not to be made with unquietnesse, and too much curiositie: but after we have faithfully called our selves to account, if we find the cause of the evil in our selves let us thank God, for the disease is half cured when the cause of it is discovered. If on the other side thou find nothing in particular which may seem to have caused this barrennesse, trouble not thy self about any more curious inquisition, but with all simplicity, without examining any more particularities do this which I will tell thee.

7. First, humble thy self profoundly in the presence of God, in acknowledgement that thou art nothing (misery onely excepted.) Alas! what am I when I am left  
to

to my self? no other thing, O Lord, but a drie barren ground, which being every where full of chaps, winneth the thirst it suffereth for want of rain from heaven; and in the mean time the wind parches it, and scatters it into dust. 2. Call upon God, and demand of him his spirituall joy. *Render me, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation. My father, if it be possible, let this cup passe from me.* Get thee away, O thou unfruitfull North-wind that witherest my soul, and come, O prosperous wind of consolations, and blow upon my garden, that its good affections may breath forth the odour of sweetnesse. 3. Go to thy Confessour, open thy heart unto him, make him see all the plights or folds of thy soul; take his advise sincerely and humbly: for God, that infinitely loveth obedience, often renders very profitable the counsels we take from others, especially from the directors of our souls, although otherwise they would be of no great consideration; as to Naaman he made the waters of Jordan healthfull, the use of which Elizeus without any appearance of humane reason had ordained him.

8. But after all this nothing is so profitable, nothing so fruitfull in such drought and barrennesse as to moderate our desire, and not suffer it to be too ardent and passionate

onate for our deliverance. I say not but that we ought humbly and quietly to wish for this deliverance, but that we should not bee too earnest in it, but submit our selves to the pure mercy of Gods providence; to the end that so long as it pleaseth him, he may make use of us amidst these thorns, and amongst these desires. Let us say then to God at these times, *O father, if it be possible, take this cup from me*: but let us withall add with great courage, *yet not my will be done but thine*. And here let us stop with as much repose as may be: for God seeing us in this holy indifferency, will comfort us with many graces and favours; as when he saw Abraham resolved to deprive himself of his sonne Isaac, he was pleased with his indifferency in this pure resignation, comforting him with a most pleasant vision, and with most welcome blessings. We ought then in all kind of afflictions, as well corporall as spirituall, in all distractions or subtractions of sensible devotion happening to us, to say from our heart with profound submission, *Our Lord gave me consolations, and our Lord hath taken them from me; his holy name be blessed*. For persisting in this humilitie, he will restore us his blessings, as he did to Job, who constantly used the like words in all his desolations.

9. Finally, my Philothea, in all this drought and sterility, let us not lose courage, but expecting patiently the return of consolations, let us go on our way, and forsake not any exercise of devotion, but if it be possible, multiply good works; and not being able to present to our spouse moist sweet-meats, let us offer him dry ones, for all is one to him, provided that the heart which offereth them be perfectly resolved to love him. When the spring is fair the bees make more honey and fewer young ones; for the good weather favouring them, they are so busie in their harvest upon the flowers that they forget the generation of their young ones: but when the spring is cold and stormy, they make more young ones and lesse honey; for not being able to go forth to gather honey, they employ themselves to multiply and increase their race. So many times it happens, Philothea, that the soul finding her self in the fair spring of spirituall comforts, busieth herself so much in gathering and sucking them, that in the abundance of these delights she produceth fewer good works; and on the contrary in spirituall storms and desolations, the more destitute she is of the pleasant contentments of devotion, the more she multiplies solid works, and abounds in the inward generation of  
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true virtues ; as of patience , humilitie, contempt of her self, resignation, and abnegation of self love.

10. It is then a great abuse of many, especially of women, to believe that the service which we do to God without savour, without tenderneſſe and ſenſe of heart, is leſſe agreeable to his divine Maieſtie; ſince on the contrary our actions are like roſes, which though being freſh they have more beautie, yet being drie they have more ſtrength and ſweetneſſe: for juſt ſo, though our works done with tenderneſſe of heart be more acceptable to us, to us I ſay that conſider onely our own delight, yet when they are performed in time of drineſſe and barrenneſſe, they have more ſweetneſſe, and a better eſteem in the preſence of God. Yes, dear Philothea, in time of deſolation our will carrieth us to the ſervice of God by main force, and conſequently it muſt needs be more vigorous and conſtant then in time of comfort.

11. It is no great matter to ſerve a Prince in the pleaſures of peace, and amongſt the delights of the Court; but to ſerve him in the difficulties of warre, amongſt troubles and perſecutions is a true mark of conſtancy and loyaltie. S. Angela de Fulgino ſaith, that the prayers which are moſt acceptable to God are thoſe which are made  
by

by force and constraint, that is, to which we apply our selves not for any delight which we find in them, nor for any inclination of our own, but merely to please God, whereto our will driveth us by violence, forcing, and breaking through the drinesse and resistance which oppose us. I say the same of all sorts of good works; for the more contradiction we find against them, either exteriour or interiour, the more are they prized and esteemed in the sight of God. The lesse there is of our particular interest in the pursuit of virtues, the more brightly shines the purity of the love of God in us. A child easily kisses his mother when she gives him sugar; but it is a signe of greater love if he kisse her after she hath given him wormwood.

### CHAP. XV.

*Confirmation and explanation of what hath been said by a notable example.*

I. **T**O make this instruction more evident, I will recite an excellent piece of the history of S. Bernard in such manner as I have found it in a learned and judicious writer. He saith then thus. It is an ordinary thing almost to all them that begin to serve God, and are not yet experienced in the subtraction of grace, nor in spirituall changes, that this favour of sensible

sible devotion; and that acceptable light which maketh them hasten into the way of God happening to fail, they presently loose courage, and fall into faintnesse and sadness of heart. Persons of understanding give this reason for it; that humane nature cannot long continue fasting, and without some delectation, either heavenly or earthly. Now as souls lifted up above themselves by the tast of higher pleasures easily renounce visible objects: so when by Gods disposition that spirituall joy is taken from them, finding themselves on the other side deprived of bodily comforts, and being not yet accustomed to expect with patience the return of the true sunne, it seems to them that they are neither in heaven nor in earth, but that they shall lie buried in a perpetuall night; so that as little children newly weaned, having lost their teets they languish, and groan, and become froward and troublesome, especially to themselves.

2. This then happened (in the voyage mentioned in the history) to one of the companie, called Geoffrie of Peronne, but newly dedicated to the service of God. He being suddenly become drie and destitute of consolation, and possessed with inward darknesse, began to remember his worldly friends, his parents, and the riches  
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which he had forsaken. By which means he was assaulted with so strong a temptation, that not being able to hide it in his discourse, one of his greatest confidants perceived it; and having dexterously found a fit opportunitie, spake thus to him in private. What means this, Geoffrie? whence comes it that thou art so extraordinary pensive and melancholy? Ah brother! answered Geoffrie with a deep sigh, I shall never more be merrie while I live. The other moved with compassion at these words, with a brotherly zeal went and told all this to their common father Saint Bernard; who perceiving the danger, went into the next Church to pray to God for him, and Geoffrie in the mean while overwhelmed with sadness, resting his head upon a stone fell asleep; but after a little time both of them arose, the one from prayer with the favour obtained, the other from sleep with so pleasant and smiling a countenance, that his dear friend marvelling at so great and sudden a change, could not refrain from giving him a friendly reproach upon the answer he had but a little before given him. Then Geoffrie replied; I told thee before that I should never more be joyfull; now I assure thee that I shall never more be sorrowfull.

3. This was the successe of the temptation of that devout person. But observe in this storie, dear Philothea, 1. That God ordinarily giveth some fore taste of heavenly joy to such as enter into his service; so to withdraw them from earthly pleasures, and encourage them in the pursuit of the love of God: as a mother, who to incite and allure her little child to her breasts puts honie upon her tetts. 2. That it is notwithstanding this good God who sometimes, according to the disposition of his wisdome, takes from us the milk and honie of consolations, to the end that weaning us in this manner, we might learn to eat the more drie and hard bread of a vigorous devotion, exercised by the triall of afflictions and temptations. 3. That sometimes verie vehement temptations arise in this drought and barrenesse; and then we must constantly fight against them, for they come not from God: but withall we must patiently suffer this desolation, since God is pleased to exercise us with it. 4. That we must never loose courage among these inward griefs, nor say with good Geoffrie I shall never more be joyfull, for in the night we must expect the day: and again in the fairest spirituall weather that we can have we must not say, *now shall I never more be*

*sad.* No, for as the wise-man sayes, in time of prosperitie we must be mindfull of adversity; we must hope in our afflictions, and fear in our prosperities; and as well in the one as in the other we must alwaies be humble. 5. That it is a soveraign remedie to discover our evill to some spirituall friend that may be able to comfort us.

4. In fine, for conclusion of this so necessary admonition, I observe, that as in all other things, so in these God and the devill have contrarie pretensions. For God would by them bring us to puritie of heart, to a generall renunciation of our own interest in what concerns his service, and to a perfect deniall of our selves: but the Devill endeavours by his pains to make us loose courage, and to put us into the way of sensuall pleasures, and at last to render us troublesome to our selves and others, thereby to disgrace and defame holy devotion. But if thou observe diligently these lessons which I have given thee, thou shalt much augment thy perfection in the exercise which thou shalt perform amongst these interiour afflictions, whereof I will not end the discourse unill I have said one word more.

5. Sometimes these loathings, this drought and barrenesse proceed from an indisposition of body; as when through  
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excesse of watching, working, fasting, we find our selves oppressed with wearinesse, drowsinesse, heavinesse, and such like infirmities; which although they depend upon the bodie, yet cease they not to incommode the spirit by reason of the strict correspondence between them. Now in such occasions we must alwayes be mindfull to perform many acts of virtue with our spirit or superiour will: for although our whole soul seem to be asleep and stupified with drowsinesse and wearinesse, yet the actions of our spirit cease not to be very acceptable to God. And we may say at that time with the sacred spouse, *I sleep, but my heart watcheth.* And as I said before, though there be lesse delight in working in this manner, yet is there more virtue and merit. The remedie in such occurrences is, to refresh the body by some kind of lawfull delight and recreation. So, Saint Francis ordained that his Religious should use such moderation in their labours, that they should not depresse the fervour of the spirit.

6. And this makes me remember that this glorious Father was once assaulted and tormented with so profound a melancholy of spirit, that he could not but declare it in his behaviour: for when he desired to converse with his Religious he could

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not, if he withdrew himself from them it was worse ; abstinence and mortification of his flesh oppressed him, and prayer eased him not at all : He continued two years in this manner, so that he seemed to be utterly forsaken of God ; but at length, after he had humbly suffered this rough tempest, our Saviour in a moment restored him to a happy tranquillitie. This shews that the greatest servants of God are subject to these disturbances, and therefore the lesser ought not to be dismayed if sometimes they happen to them.

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## THE FIFTH PART OF THE INTRODUCTION,

Containing exercises and instructions to  
renew the soul, and confirm it  
in devotion.

### CHAP. I.

*That we ought every year to renew our good  
purposes by the exercises following.*

1. **T**He first point of these exercises consists in knowing well the importance of them. Our humane nature falleth easily from her good affections, because of the frailtie and evill inclinations of our flesh,  
which

which burthen the soul and weigh her downwards, if she raise not up her self often by main force of resolution; as birds fall suddenly to the ground, if they multiply not the strokes and spreadings of their wings to keep themselves in flight. For this cause, dear Philothea, thou hast need very often renew and repeat the good purposes which thou hast made to serve God, for fear least by negligence thou relapse into thy first estate, or rather into a farre worse. For spirituall falls have this property, that they cast us alwaies lower then was the estate from which we ascended up to devotion.

2. There is no clock be it never so good but must be wound up twice a day, morning and evening, and at least once a year taken in pieces, to take away the rust which it hath gathered, to mend what is bowed or broken, and to repair what is worn: so he that hath a true care of his heart, ought to wind it up to God evening and morning by the foresaid exercises, and moreover many times take a review of his estate, redresse and rectifie it, and at least once a year take it in pieces, and examine diligently every part of it; that is, all the affections and passions of it, that all defects may be repaired. And as the clock-maker with some delicate oyle a-



noints the wheels, the springs, and all the moving parts of his clock, that the motions may be more nimble, and the clock lesse subject to rust: so the devout person, who hath thus examined his heart, to renew it well indeed must anoint it with the Sacraments of Confession and the holy Eucharist. This exercise will repair thy forces decayed by time, warm thy heart, make thy good resolutions return green, and thy virtues blossome. The ancient Christians practised this diligently upon the anniversary day of our Saviours Baptisme, on which (as witnesseth Saint Gregorie Nazianzen) they renewed those professions and protestations which they made in this Sacrament. Let us do the like, (my dear Philothea) disposing our selves most willingly to it, and imploying our selves very seriously therein. Having then chosen a fit time according to the advice of thy ghostly father, retiring thy self into a little more spirituall and reall solitude then ordinarie, make one, or two, or three meditations upon the following points, according to the method which I have given thee in the second part.

C H A P.

## CHAP. II.

*Considerations upon the favour which God doth us by calling us to his service, according to the protestation mentioned before.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the points of thy protestation. The first is, to have for ever forsaken, cast away, derested, and renounced all mortal sin. The second, to have dedicated and consecrated thy soul, thy heart, and thy body, with all their faculties, to the love and service of God. The third, that if thou chance to fall into any evil action thou wilt immediately rise again by Gods grace. Are not these good, just, noble, and generous resolutions? Consider well in thy soul how holy and reasonable this protestation is, and how much to be desired.

2. Consider to whom thou hast made this protestation; for it is to God. If our word given to men do strictly oblige us, how much more that which we have given to God? *Ah Lord!* (said David) *it is to thee my heart hath spoken, my heart hath pronounced this good word, I will not forget it.*

3. Consider in whose presence; for it was in the sight of the whole court of heaven. Alas! the holy Virgin, S. Joseph,

thy good Angel, S. Lewis, all this blessed company beheld thee, and sighed at thy words with sighs of joy and approbation, and with the eyes of unspeakable love saw thy heart prostrate at the feet of our Saviour, consecrating it self to his service. They made particular triumph for that in the heavenly Jerusalem, and they will now make commemoration of it, if with a true heart thou renewest thy resolutions.

4. Consider by what means thou didst make this protestation: Alas, how good and gracious was God to thee at that time? Tell me truly, wert thou not invited by the sweet inticements of the holy Ghost? the cords wherewith God drew thy little bark unto this secure haven, were they not of love and charity? how did he seek to win thee by his divine sugar, the Sacraments, reading, and prayer? Alas, dear Philothea, thou wert asleep, and God watched over thee; he thought over thy soul thoughts of peace, he meditated for thee meditations of love.

5. Consider at what time God drew thee to these great resolutions: it was in the flower of thine age. Ah, what a felicity is it to learn betimes that which we cannot know but too late? S. Augustine having been called at the age of thirty years,

years, cryed out : *O ancient beauty, how is it that I know thee so late ? Alas, I saw thee before, but considered thee not.* And thou mayst well say; *O ancient sweetnesse, why did I not taste of thee sooner ?* and yet alas thou didst not deserve it then : therefore acknowledging the great grace of God in calling thee to him in thy youth, say with David, *Thou hast enlightened me, O God, and touched me from my youth, and I will for ever declare thy mercy.* But if this were in thy age, alas Philothea, what a favour was it after thou hadst mis-spent so many former years that God hath called thee before death, and stopt the current of thy misery in a time wherein if it had continued thou hadst been eternally miserable !

6. Consider the effects of this vocation, and I believe thou wilt find a good change, comparing that which thou art with that which thou hast been. Dost thou not esteem it a happinesse to know how to speak to God by prayer ? to have an affection to love him ? to have appeased and pacified many passions which tormented thee ? to have avoided many sins and perplexities of conscience ? and in a word, to have communicated so much more often then thou wouldest have done, uniting thy self to this sovereign fountain  
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of eternal graces ? Ah, what inestimable favours are these ! We must weigh them, Philothea, with the weights of the Sanctuary : it is Gods right hand that hath done all this. *The right hand of God (saith David) hath done powerfully, his right hand hath raised me : I will not die but live, and declare with heart, word, and deed the wonders of his goodnesse.*

7. After all these considerations, which as thou seest do furnish thee with plenty of good affections, thou must simply conclude with thanksgiving, and an affectionate prayer for thy good progresse : and so retire with great humility and confidence in God, deferring to pronounce thy resolutions till after the second point of this exercise.

### CHAP. III.

*The examination of our soul concerning her advancement in Devotion.*

I. **T**He second point of this exercise is somewhat long, and to practise it it is not requisite to perform it all at once, but at divers times ; as to take that which concerneth thy demeanour towards God at one time, that which appertaineth to thy self at another, that which toucheth thy neighbour at a third, and the examining of thy passions at a fourth. Neither is it requisite

requisite nor necessary to do it all kneeling, but only the beginning and ending, which comprehend the affections. The other points of the examination thou maist perform profitably walking, or more profitably in bed, if thou canst be there without drowinesse, and thoroughly awake: but to do this, thou must have read them well before. Yet it is requisite to perform all this second point in three dayes and two nights at the most, taking every day and night some hour, that is to say, some time most convenient for thee: for if this exercise should be done at times far distant one from another, it would loose his force and make but weak impressions.

2. After every point of the examination, observe in what thou findest thy self to fail, and in what thou art defective, and what principall disorders thou hast discovered; that so thou mayst declare them, and take counsel, resolution, and strength of spirit. And although on those dayes in which thou shalt perform this exercise it be not necessary to retire thy self absolutely from company, yet thou must be somewhat more private then ordinary, especially towards the evening, that thou maist go early to bed, and take the rest of body and repose of mind necessary to meditation. And in the day time thou must use frequent

quent aspirations to God, to our Lady, to the Angels, to all the heavenly Jerusalem: and all this must be done with a heart longing after God and the perfection of thy soul.

3. To begin then this examination well; First place thy self in the presence of God.  
 2. Invoke the holy Ghost, imploring light and cleanness, that thou mayst know thy self well; say with S. Augustin, who cryed out before God in humble spirit, *O Lord, let me know thee, and let me know my self*: and with S. Francis, who asked God, *who art thou, and who am I?* Protest that thou art not solicitous of thy advancement to the end to rejoyce at it in thy self, but to rejoyce at it in God, not to glorifie thy self but to glorifie God, and give him thanks for it. Protest likewise that if thou findest that thou hast gone little forward or rather backward, thou wilt not for all that be dejected nor waxe colder through faintnesse of heart; but that thou wilt rather take more courage, become more humble, and take more care to amend thy faults by the assistance of Gods grace. 3. This done, consider gently and quietly how thou hast behaved thy self even till that present hour towards God, towards thy neighbour, and towards thy self.



## CHAP. IV.

*An examination of the estate of our souls  
towards God.*

1. **I**N what state is thy heart as concerning mortal sin? hast thou a firm resolution never to commit any whatsoever shall happen? hath this resolution continued since thy last protestation till this time? In this resolution consisteth the foundation of a spiritual life.

2. How is thy heart disposed in respect of Gods commandments? dost thou find them good, pleasant, and delightful? Ah! my dear child, he that hath his taste right and his stomach good loves wholesome meats, and rejects others.

3. How is thy heart in case of venial sins? we cannot keep our selves from committing now and then one; but is there none to which thou hast a special inclination? or (which is worse) is there none to which thou bearest love and affection?

4. How is thy heart affected towards spiritual exercises? dost thou love them and esteem them? art thou not out of humour with them? to which of them dost thou find thy self least or most inclined? To hear the word of God, to read it, to discourse of it, to meditate, to aspire to God, to go to Confession, to receive  
spiritual



spiritual instructions, to prepare thy self to communion, to communicate, to restrain thy affections; in all this what is there repugnant to thy heart? And if thou find any thing to which thy heart hath lesse inclination, examine from whence that dislike ariseth, and what causes it.

5. How is thy heart towards God himself? takes it pleasure in the remembrance of God? finds it sweetnesse therein? Ah! said David, *I have thought upon God, and taken delight therein.* Findest thou a promptnesse and willingnesse in thy heart to love God, and a particular contentment in relishing this love? thy heart doth it recreate it self in meditating upon the immensity, bounty, and sweetnesse of God? if the remembrance of God happen to thee amidst the affaires and vanities of the world, doth it find place in thy heart? doth it seize upon it? doest thou find thy heart turn towards God, and as it were go to meet him? certainly there are such soules in the world.

6. A wife when her husband comes home from a long journey, so soon as she knowes of his return or heares his voyce, although she be engaged in businesse, and detained from him by some necessity, yet her heart cannot be withheld

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held from him, but abandons all other thoughts to think upon her husband returned. It is the same with souls that love God well; let them be never so busie, when the remembrance of God comes near them they neglect all things else, for joy that this dear remembrance is returned: and this is a very good signe.

7. How is thy heart affected towards Jesus Christ, God and man? takest thou pleasure in him? Bees delight in their honey; Wasps in ill savours: so good souls take a contentment in Jesus Christ, & bear an extream tenderneſſe of love towards him; but the wicked delight in vanities.

8. How is thy heart affected towards our blessed Ladie, thy good Angel, and the Saints? doest thou truly love them? haſt thou a ſpeciall confidence in their favour and interceſſion? do their images, their lives, and praises please thee?

9. Concerning thy tongue; how ſpeak-  
eſt thou of God? doest thou please thy ſelf to ſpeak well of him, according to thy condition and ability? doest thou love to ſing hymns to his praise and glory?

10. Concerning works; think whether thou have a true hearty deſire of the exterior glory of God, and to do ſomewhat for his honour: for ſuch as love God love with him the ornament of his houſe.

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11. Consider whether thou hast forsaken any affection, or renounced any thing for Gods sake; for it is a great signe of love to deprive our selves of any thing in consideration of him whom we love. What hast thou then heretofore forsaken for the love of God?

### CHAP. V.

*An examination of our estate touching our selves.*

1. **H**OW lovest thou thy self? doest thou not love thy self too much for the worlds sake? if so, thou wilt desire to dwell alwayes here, and wilt be very solicitous to establish thy self upon earth: but if thou love thy self for heavens sake, thou wilt desire (at least thou wilt be contented) to depart from hence whensoever it shall please our Saviour.

2. Dost thou keep good order in the love of thy self? for there is nothing ruines us but the inordinate love of our selves. Now well ordered love requires that we love the soul better then the bodie; that we take more care to store up virtue then any other thing; that we make more account of heavenly glory then of base and transitory honour. A well ordered heart will rather say in it self, *What will the Angels say if I think upon such a thing?* then, *what will men say?*

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3. What love bearest thou to thy heart? art thou willing to serve it when it is sick? alas, thou owest it this care to help it thy self, and procure it to be succoured by others, when passions torment it, and to lay aside all other cares for that.

4. What dost thou esteem thy self in the sight of God? nothing doubtlesse. It is no great humilitie in a flie, to think her self nothing in regard of a mountain; nor for a drop of water, to esteem it self nothing in comparison of the sea; nor for a spark of fire, to hold it self nothing in respect of the sunne: but humility consists in not esteeming our selves better then others, and in desiring not to be esteemed by others. In what state art thou in this respect?

5. Touching thy tongue; dost thou not boast either on the one side, or the other? dost thou not flatter thy self in speaking of thy self?

6. As for works; dost thou use no recreation destructive to thy health? I mean, vain and unprofitable pleasures, too much watching without cause, and such like?

#### CHAP. VI.

*An examination of the estate of our souls towards our neighbour.*

1. **T**He love between husband and wife ought

ought to be gentle, calm, firm, and constant; and grounded principally upon the ordinance of God, who commands and requires it. The same is to be understood of love amongst children, kindred, and also amongst friends, every one in his degree.

2. But to speak in generall in what state thy heart is towards thy neighbour: dost thou love him cordially, and for Gods sake? To discern this well, thou must represent to thy self certain peevish and crabbed persons; for it is to such people that we exercise the love of God towards our neighbour, and much more towards such as have injured us either in word or deed. Examine well whether thy heart be right towards them, or whether thou findest any repugnancy against this love.

3. Art thou apt to speak ill of thy neighbour, and especially of such as love thee not? dost thou any prejudice to thy neighbour, directly or indirectly? if thou have the use of reason thou wilt easily discern thy defects.

## CHAP. VII.

*An examination of the affections of  
our soul.*

1. I Have thus drawn out these points into length, because in the examination of them consisteth the knowledge of our spirituall

rituall advancement : for as concerning the examination of finnes, I leave that for the confessions of such as never think of advancing.

2. Yet we must not labour in any one of these articles otherwise then very gently, examining onely in what state our heart hath been concerning them since our resolution, and what notable defects we have committed in them.

3. But to abridge all ; we must reduce our examen to the survey of our passions : and if it be troublesome to consider every particular so exactly as is prescribed, we may examine in what state we have been, and how we have behaved our selves, in this manner. In our love, towards God, our neighbour, and our selves. In our hatred, towards sin in our selves, and towards sin in others ; for we must desire the extirpation both of the one and the other. In desires, touching riches, pleasures, honours. In fear of danger to fall into sinne, and in fear of losse of worldly goods ; for we fear the one too much, and the other too little. In hope, too much fixed upon the world & temporall things, or too little upon God and eternall things. In sadnesse, if it be too excessive for transitory things ; and in joy, if it be too great for triviall things. In fine, what affection doth predominate in thy

thy heart ? what passion doth most of all possesse it ? in what hath it chiefly gone astray ? For by the passions of the soul we may judge of her estate, examining them one after another. For as he that playes on the Lute, by touching all the strings finds which are out of tune, and accords them either by winding them up or letting them down : so we having examined the love, hatred, desire, fear, hope, sadnesse, or joy of our soul ; if we find them out of tune for that aire which we would play, which is the glory of God, we may tune them by means of his grace, and the counsell of our Ghostly father.

### CHAP. VIII.

*Affections to be exercised after this examination.*

**A**FTER thou hast gently considered each point of this examination, and seen in what state thou art, thou shalt proceed to affections, in this manner.

1. Give God thanks for the amendment thou hast found in thy life since thy resolution : and acknowledge that it was his mercie alone that hath wrought it in thee, and for thee.

2. Humble thy self profoundly before his Majestie, acknowledging that if thou hast not much profited it hath been thine  
own

own fault, because thou hast not faithfully, courageously, and constantly complied with the inspirations, lights, and motions, which he hath given thee in prayer, and by other means.

3. Promise him that thou wilt for ever praise him for the favours conferred upon thee, in converting thee from thy evil inclinations to this amendment.

4. Ask pardon of him for the unfaithfulness and disloyalty which thou hast returned for these graces.

5. Offer him up thy heart, to the end he may make himself sole master of it.

6. Beseech him to render thee intirely faithfull to him.

7. Invoke the Saints, our B. Lady, thy good Angel, thy Patron, S. Joseph, and the rest.

## CHAP. IX.

*Considerations proper to renew our good purposes.*

1. **A**FTER thou hast made this examination, and diligently conferred with some good Director concerning thy defects, and the remedies for them, take these considerations following; making one of them every day by way of meditation, employing therein the time of thy prayer, and do this alwayes in the same method for matter



matter of preparation and affections, which thou hast used in the meditations of the first part; placing thy self first of all in the presence of God, and then imploring his grace to establish thee in his holy love and service.

## CHAP. X.

*The first consideration : of the excellency of our soul.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the worth and excellency of thy soul, indued with an understanding which knoweth not onely all this visible world, but also that there are Angels and a Heaven, that there is a most high God, most good, and ineffable, and that there is an Eternity; and further knows the means how to live well in this visible world, and to associate her self to the Angels in heaven, and to enjoy God eternally.

2. Thy soul hath also a will, all noble, which can love God, and cannot hate him in himself. Consider thy heart how generous it is; and that as no corrupt thing can entice the bees, but their delight is onely amongst the flowers: so thy heart hath no repose but in God alone; no creature can satisfie it. Recall boldly the most dear and beloved affections which heretofore possessed thy heart, and judge in truth whether

ther they were not full of unquiet molestations, of irksome thoughts, and importunate cares, amongst which thy poor heart was miserable.

3. Alas! our heart runs greedily after creatures, thinking to satisfie its desires in them: but as soon as it hath met with them it finds it self deceived, and that nothing can content it; God being unwilling that our heart, no more then Noahs dove, should find any resting place till it return to him from whence it went forth. Ah, what beauty of nature is in our heart, and why do we detain it against its will in the service of creatures?

4. Oh, my fair soul, (shouldst thou say) thou canst understand and love God, why wilt thou content thy self with lesse? thou maist pretend to Eternitie, wherefore dost thou busie thy self in momentarie things? It was one of the griefs of the prodigall child, that when he might have fared deliciously at his fathers table he fed nastily amongst the swine. O my soul, thou art capable of God; wo be to thee if thou satisfiest thy self with any thing lesse then God.

5. Rouse up thy soul vigorously with this consideration; put her in mind that she is immortall, and worthie of eternitie; fill her with courage upon this subject.

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## CHAP. XI.

*The second consideration : of the excellencie of virtues.*

1. **C**ONSIDER that onely virtue and devotion can render thy soul contented in this world. See how fair they are ! make a comparison between virtues and their contrarie vices. What sweetnesse is there in patience compared to revenge ? in mildnesse in respect of anger and frowardnesse ? in humilitie in regard of pride and ambition ? in liberalitie compared to covetousnesse ? in charitie in comparison of envie ? in sobrietie in respect of intemperance ? Virtues have this excellency, that they delight the soul with an incomparable sweetnesse and pleasure after we have practised them ; whereas vices leave her infinitely wearied and tired. Why indeavour we not then to obtain these pleasures ?

2. In case of vices, he that hath but few is not contented, and he that hath many is discontented : but for virtues, he that hath but few yet hath he alreadie contentment, which increases daily.

3. O devout life ! how fair, lovely, sweet, and pleasant art thou ! thou sweetest tribulations, and augmentest consolations : without thee, even good is  
evill,

evill, pleasures are full of reſleſſe troubles and deceitfulneſſe. Ah ! he that underſtands thee well will ſay with the Samaritane, *Lord give me this water* : an aspiration very frequent to the holy mother Tereſa, and S. Katharine of Genua, although upon different occaſions.

## CHAP. XI I.

*The third conſideration : of the examples of Saints.*

I. CONSIDER the examples of the Saints of all ſorts ; what is it that they have not done to love God and to be intirely his ? Look upon the invincible martyrs in their reſolutions ; what torments have they not ſuffered in keeping them ? But above all, thoſe fair and flourishing Virgins, whiter then Lillies in puritie, redder then Roſes in charitie, ſome at twelve, others at thirteen, fifteen, and twentieth years of age, have indured a thouſand ſorts of martyrdomes rather then they would renounce their reſolutions, not onely in profeſſion of faith, but alſo in their proteſtation of devotion ; ſome dying rather then to forſake their Virginitie, others rather then to quit their attendance upon the poor, comforting the afflicted, and burying the dead. O God, what conſtancie hath that frail ſex ſhewed in like occaſions !

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2. Consider so many holy Confessours; with what courage have they contemned the world? how invincible have they been in their resolutions? nothing could make them relinquish them; they imbraced them without reservation, and kept them without exception. Good God! what admirable things doth S. Augustine write of his mother Monica? with what constancie did she pursue her enterprize of serving God, in her marriage and in her widowhood? And S. Hierome of his dear daughter Paula, amongst how many crosses, how many various accidents? What is there that we may not do after such excellent patterns? they did all for the same God, for the same virtues; why should not we do as much in our condition, and according to our vocation for our good resolution and holy protestation?

### CHAP. XIII.

*The fourth consideration: of the love that Jesus Christ beareth to us.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the love wherewith Jesus Christ our Lord suffered so much in this world, and especially in the garden of mount Olivet, and upon mount Calvarie. This love concerned thee, and by all his pains and torments he obtained of God the Father good resolutions and protestations

stations for thy heart; and by the same means further obtained all things necessary for thy soul, to maintain, nourish, strengthen, and fulfill these resolutions. O resolution, how precious art thou, being daughter of such a mother as is the passion of my Saviour! O how carefully ought my soul to cherish thee, since thou hast been so dear to my sweet Jesus! Alas, O Saviour of my soul, thou diedst to gain me resolutions: ah! give me grace to die rather than to lose them. Observe, Philothea, it is certain that the heart of our dear Jesus saw thy heart from the tree of the Crosse, and loved it, and by this love obtained for it all the blessings that ever thou shalt have, and amongst others these resolutions. Yes, my dear Philothea, we may all say with the Prophet Jeremie; O my Lord, before I was thou beheldest me, and calledst me by my name; since that in truth his divine goodnesse in his love and mercie, prepared all the generall and particular means of our salvation, and consequently our resolutions. Yes without doubt, as a woman with child prepares the cradle, linnen, swathing-bands, &c even a nurse for the child which she hopeth to bring forth, although it be not yet in the world: so our Saviour having his goodnesse great with child of thee, pretending to bring

thee forth to salvation, and to make thee his daughter, prepared upon the tree of the Crosse all that was necessarie for thee, thy spirituall cradle, thy linnen and swathing-bands, thy nurse, and all that was convenient for thy blessednesse. These are all the means, all the allurements, all the graces by which he conducteth thy soul, and would bring it to perfection.

2. Ah ! my God, how deeply ought we to imprint this in our memory ! is it possible that I have been loved, and so tenderly loved by my Saviour, that he should think of me in particular, and of all these little occurrences by which he hath drawn me to him ? And how then ought we to value, esteem, and imploy all this to our advantage ! This is very pleasant : this loving heart of my God thought upon Philothea, loved her, and procured her a thousand means of salvation, even as much as though there had been no other soul in the world for him to think of ; just as the sun shining upon one side of the earth, shineth no lesse then if it shined in no other place but onely there ; for in the very same manner did our Lord think and take care of all his dear children, providing for each one of us as though he had not thought upon the rest. *He hath loved me, (saith S. Paul) and hath given himself for*

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for me; as if he had said, for me onely, just as though he had done nothing for the rest. O Philothea, this ought to be engraven in thy soul, to cherish and nourish thy resolutions, which have been so pretious to the heart of our Saviour.

#### CHAP. XIV.

*The fifth Consideration: of the eternall love of God towards us.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the externall love which God hath born thee: for before our Lord Jesus Christ as man suffered for thee upon the Crosse, his divine Majestie designed thee in his soveraign goodnesse, and loved thee infinitely. But when began he to love thee? even when he began to be God. And when began he to be God? Never; for he hath alwayes been God without beginning and without ending, and so he hath loved thee from all eternitie: and therefore hath he prepared for thee the graces and favours which he hath conferred upon thee. He saith by his Prophet, speaking to thee as well as to any other, *I have loved thee with a perpetuall charitie, therefore have I drawn thee unto me, taking pittie of thee.* He then thought amongst other things to cause thee to make good resolutions to serve him.

2. O God, what resolutions are these

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which God hath thought, meditated, and designed from all eternitie ! how dear and precious ought they to be to us ! what ought we to suffer rather than to forsake one tittle of them ! Sure the world ought rather to perish : for all the world together is not worth one soul ; and a soul is worth nothing without resolutions.

### CHAP. XV.

*Generall affections upon the precedent considerations, and a conclusion of this exercise.*

1. **O** Dear resolutions ! you are the beautifull tree of life, which my God hath planted with his own hand in the midst of my heart, and my Saviour would water with his blood to make it fructifie : rather will I suffer a thousand deaths than that any wind shall overturn you. No, neither vanitie, nor delights, nor riches, nor tribulations shall ever force me from my design.

2. Alas ! Lord, but thou hast planted, and eternally preserved this fair tree in thy fatherly bosome for my garden. Alas ! how many souls are there which have not been favoured in this manner, and how then shall I ever humble my self enough under thy mercy ?

3. **O** faire and holy resolutions ! if  
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I keep you you will preserve me ; if you live in my soul my soul shall live in you : Live then for ever, O resolutions which are eternal in the mercy of God ; live and remain eternally in me , for I will never forsake you.

4. After these affections, thou must separate and consider apart the means necessary to maintain these dear resolutions, and protest to use them faithfully ; as frequent prayer, the Sacraments, good works, amendment of our faults discovered, avoiding occasions of evil, and following the counsels which shall be given thee to this end.

5. This done, as by way of recovering breath and courage, protest a thousand times that thou wilt continue in thy resolutions ; and as if thou hadst thy heart, thy soul, and thy will in thy hands, dedicate them, consecrate them, sacrifice them to God, protesting that thou wilt never receive them again, but leave them in the hand of his divine Majestie, to follow in all things his holy ordinance.

6. Pray to God to renew thee intirely, and to blesse this renewing of thy protestation, and confirm it. Invoke the B. Virgin, thy Angel, S. Lewis, and other Saints.

7. In this commotion of heart go to the feet of thy Confessor, accuse thy self

of the principal faults which thou shalt observe to have been committed since thy last general confession, and receive absolution in the same manner thou didst the first time, and pronounce thy protestation before him, and sign it, and in the end, go unite thy renewed heart to thy Lord and Saviour in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

## CHAP. XVI.

### *Considerations after this exercise.*

1. **T**He day thou shalt have made this renovation and the other following, thou oughtest very often to repeat by heart and by mouth, those ardent speeches of S. Paul, S. Augustine, S. Katharine of Genua, and others: *No, I am no more mine: whether I live or dye I am my Saviours. I have nothing that is me or mine: my me is Jesus, and my mine is to be wholly his. O world, thou art alwaies thy self, and I have been alwaies my self, but from henceforth I will be no more my self. No, we will be no more our selves, for we will have a changed heart, and the world that hath so often deceived us shall be deceived in us: for not observing our change but by little and little, it will think us alwaies to be Esau, and we will prove Jacob.*

2. All these exercises must rest in our hearts:

hearts: and when we have finished our meditation, we must go fair and softly to our affaires and conversations, for fear lest the liquour of our resolutions be suddenly spilt; for it must sink, and disperse it self into all the parts of our soul, yet without force, either of mind or body.

## CHAP. XVII.

*An answer to two objections which may be made against this Introduction.*

1. **T**He world will tell thee, Philothea, that these exercises and advises are so many that he that will practise them must apply himself to nothing else. Alas, dear Philothea, should we do nothing else we should do well; since so we should do that which we ought to do in this world. But seest thou not the deceit? If all these exercises were to be performed every day they would indeed busie us enough: but it is not requisite to practise them but in time, and place, each one according to occasion. How many civill lawes are there in the Digest and Code which ought to be observed? but that is to be understood according to occurrences; not that every one should practise them every day. Moreover David, a King full of most difficult businesses, practised many more exercises then I have prescribed thee. Saint Lewis,

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an admirable King both in peace and in warr, and one that with an incomparable care administred justice, managed his affaires, heard daily two masses, said Evensong and Compline with his Chaplain; performed his meditation, and visited hospitals every Friday, confessed, and took the discipline, heard Sermons very often, and used spiritual conference; and for all that never omitted one onely occasion in the publike which he did not more diligently put in execution: and his Court was more splendid and flourishing, then ever it had been in the time of his predecessors. Perform then these exercises chearfully, as I have prescribed them, and God will give thee leisure and strength enough for all the rest of thy businesse; yea though he make the sun stand still for thee as he did in the time of Joshua. We alwaies do enough when God works with us.

2. The world will say, that I suppose almost throughout the whole work that my dear Philothea hath the gift of mental prayer; and yet every one hath it not: so that this Introduction will not serve for all. This is true without doubt, I have presupposed that: and it is true too that every one hath not the gift of mental prayer; but it is likewise true that almost every man

man may have it, even the most unlearned, so that they have good conductours, and that they labour to obtain it, as much as is requisite. And if there be any who have not this gift in any proportion, (which I think can happen but very seldom) a wise directour will easily make them supply that want, either by making them to read, or hear read these same considerations which are put into meditations.

### CHAP. XVIII.

*Three principal advises for this introduction.*

1. **T**He first day of every moneth renew the protestation set down in the first part after meditation; and protest at all times to have a will to observe it; saying with David, *No my God, never will I forget thy justifications; for in them thou hast given me life.* And when thou shalt find any disorder in thy soul, take thy protestation in hand, and prostrate in the spirit of humility pronounce it from thy heart, and thou shalt find great refreshment.

2. Professe to all the world that thou hast a will to be devout: Be not ashamed of those common and ordinary actions requisite to lead us to the love of God: Advow boldly that thou doest thy endeavour

vour to meditate, and that thou hadst rather dye then sin mortally ; that thou wilt frequent the Sacraments, and follow the counsels of thy ghostly father, (though many times for good considerations it be not expedient to name him.) For this freeness in confessing that we have a will to serve God, and that we consecrate ourselves to his love by a special affection, is most acceptable to his divine Majestie, who will not that we be ashamed of him or his Crosse. Besides it prevents many invitations which the world would make to the contrary ; and obliges us in point of reputation to do as we professe. The Philosophers professed themselves Philosophers that they might be suffered to live like Philosophers : and we must make ourselves known to be lovers of Devotion that we may be permitted to live devoutly. If any one tell thee thou maist live devoutly without the practise of these exercises and advices, deny it not ; but answer him mildly, that thy weaknesse is so great that thou hast more need of help then others.

3. In fine, my dearest Philothea, I conjure thee by all that is holy in heaven and earth, by the Baptisme which thou hast received, by the breasts which our Saviour Jesus Christ did suck, by the charitable

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heart wherewith he loved thee, by the bowels of the mercy in which thou hopest, continue and persevere in this happy enterprise of a devout life. Our dayes passe away, death is at the gate; *the trumpet sounds the retreat*, (saith S. Gregory Nazianzen) *let every man be ready, for judgment is near.* S. Symphorians mother seeing him led to martyrdom cryed after him; my son, my son, remember eternal life, look up to heaven and think upon him that reignes there; thy approaching end will soon terminate the course of this life. I say the same to thee, Philothea, look towards heaven, and forsake it not for earth; consider hell, and cast not thy self thither for transitory pleasures; remember Jesus Christ, deny him not for the world: and though the labour of a devout life seem hard, sing with S. Francis,

*The greatest pains are greatest pleasures,  
To those that seek for heavenly treasures.*

Live Jesus! to whom with the Father, and holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.



A COLLECTION OF  
The AUTHOURS choicest  
Maximes touching the perfect duty of  
a Christian.

*First towards God.*

1. IF the secrets of advancing in perfection shall be demanded, I know no other then this; To love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as our selves.

2. Keep thy eye stedfast upon God, and thy self; and thou shalt never see God without goodnesse, nor thy self without misery.

3. As none shall ever see God so much as he is visible; so none shall ever love him so much as he is amiable.

4. He that covets not to love God still more and more, never loves him enough: enough of this divine exercise is not sufficient to him that would stop there as if he were satisfied.

5. To whom God is all, the world ought to be nothing.

6. Let us be what God will, so that we be his: and let us not be what we will our selves, against the will of God.

7. There is nothing so little which may be slighted in the service of God.

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8. The great advancement of the soul in virtue consists not in much meditating upon God, but in much loving him.

9. We must never forsake Gods service, nor refrain from good works, whatsoever opposition or ingratitude we find: for whoever seeks God is never discouraged for the faults of men.

10. Where Gods will is accomplished, daily bread is never wanting.

11. He to whom God alone is pleasing, is displeased with nothing but that which displeaseth God.

12. 'Tis a sure signe that we love nothing but God in all things, when we love him equally in all things; for he being alwayes equall to himself, the inequality of our love towards him cannot proceed but from the consideration of something that is not God.

13. In divine matters a generous soul finds greatest contentment in believing things most difficult.

14. All our actions take their value from their conformitie to the will of God.

15. The love of God and suffering are the most acceptable sacrifices we can offer to him, who saved us by love and suffering.

16. He that neglects his own will, complies best with Gods.

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*Towards our Neighbour.*

1. The rule of our neighbour is the tree of knowledge ; we are forbidden to touch it by way of judgement because God hath reserved it to himself.

2. We ought to love our neighbour upon earth as we shall love him in Heaven.

3. We cannot love our neighbour too much, but we may shew too much our love.

4. To bear with the imperfections of our neighbour is one of the chief points of the love we ow him.

5. We must never endure to hear evil spoken of any but of our selves.

6. We must never undervalue any person. The workman loves not that his work should be despised in his presence ; Now God is present every where, and every person is his work.

7. It is a spirituall injustice to desire to know the secrets of others, and to tell none of our own.

8. We ought not to love our neighbour either because he is virtuous, or because we hope he will be so, but because God commands us.

9. In matter of good-works we must speak little, think little, and do much.

10. It is a great evil not to do good.

11. The

11. The just man never dies unprepared; for he is well prepared for death who perseveres in Christian justice to the end.

12. Whosoever will arrive at a new life must passe by the death of the old.

13. He that is truly humble never thinks himself wronged.

*Towards our selves.*

1. To give a good rule to our soul, we must command her to do all her actions in the presence of God.

2. To live contented in a moderate estate, we must never consider those that have more but those that have lesse then our selves.

3. He that most mortifies naturall inclinations receives most supernatural inspirations.

4. Meditate often upon Eternity, and no accidents of this mortall life will trouble thee.

5. It is not sufficient to ask advise but we must follow it, and willingly submit our own judgement to that of others.

6. All devotion is false which is incompatible with our profession.

7. It is the great misfortune of man to desire to enjoy those things which he should onely use.

8. To have a desire to be poor and not  
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to receive the inconveniences of it is too great ambition ; for it is to desire the honour of poverty and the commodity of wealth.

9. To be rich in effect and poore in affection is the greatest happinesse of a Christian ; for he hath thereby the commodity of riches for this world, and the merit of poverty for the world to come.

10. There is no better way to end happily a true spirituall life then daily to begin it.

11. Who pretend to have part with Jesus glorified, must first take part with Jesus crucified.

12. We must live in the world as if our souls were in heaven, and our bodies in the grave.

13. In the death of our passions consists the life of our soul.

14. It is not humilitie to acknowledge our selves miserable ; that onely is not to be a beast : but it is humility to desire that others should esteem us so.

15. Our free will is never so free as when it is slave to the will of God ; never so much slave as when it serves our own lust : It is never alive but when it dies to itself ; nor never dead but when it lives to itself.

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the fault we commit in sinne : for the fault would not be sinne, if it were not against reason.

17. Virtues never have their full growth but when they bring forth desires of advancing, which like spirituall seeds serve to produce new degrees of virtues.

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*Other choice Maximes drawn out of the same Authour.*

1. **W**E must never speak of God, nor of things which concern his service carelessly, by way of discourse, or entertainment ; but alwayes with great respect and humble mind.

2. We must fear the judgement of God without discouragement ; and encourage our selves without presumption.

3. Never consider the substance of things, but the honour which they have to be acceptable unto God.

4. I love not to hear it said we must do this or that, because there is more merit : all must be done for the glory of God.

5. Being exercised by temptations, we must not grow impatient ; but rest quiet in an humble and chearfull resignation to the will of God.

6. We shall never have peace with our selves but when we have peace with God.

7. What-

7. Whatsoever holy action we do we please not God, except we do what he requires of us: no more then a painter in representing an eagle pleaseth him that desired a bee.

8. Let us never look upon our crosses but through the Crosse of our blessed Saviour; and we shall find them so pleasant, that we shall more desire affliction then all the comforts in the world.

9. All our devotion must not be in our Oratory, in the Church, in meditations, prayers, and good desires; but we must proceed to practise, and remember to live according to the resolutions we have made in the fervour of devotion.

10. Desire to obtain the love of God makes us meditate; but that love once obtained makes us contemplate.

11. When our will hath met with God it reposes in him, taking there its chief delight, yet ceases not to move forward in desire; but as it desires to love, so it loves to desire, it hath the desire of love, and the love of desire.

12. Benefits are willingly received by all, but to receive afflictions belongs only to perfect love; which loves so much the more, because they are not to be loved but in respect of the hand that gives them.

13. In

13. In the house of the just man every thing is busie, there is nothing unprofitable, nothing slothfull.

14. We ought to perform the duty of our vocation, without considering what will follow.

15. To perfect obedience is required the renouncing our own proper judgement.

16. Reason invested with mildnesse and gentlenesse hath great force and lustre; but with choler it loseth both.

17. We ought not to disquiet our selves in our temptations and infirmities: but glory rather in our weaknesse, to the end that Gods power may appear in us, supporting it against the force of temptation.

18. Salvation is shewed to faith, prepared for hope, and given onely to charity.

19. The more a soul is humble, the more it is couragious, for believing that she can do nothing of her self, she confesseth God omnipotent, who being able to use her as his instrument for what he shall please, doth also often make choice of such who are or think themselves the most unable.

20. The man who referres himself wholly to God is enabled thereby to do a thousand good deeds; and rendring  
faith-



faithfully all honour to him, it is incredible what wonders God works by that mans means.

21. The spirit of a right virtuous man doth not strive to undertake much, nor to make a great noise or shew; but in all plainnesse and sincerity he laboureth to do well what he undertakes, and that purely for the love of God.

22. Love to follow the advise of others much rather then thine own, and do nothing without counsel; for that is the way not to erre, but alwayes to enjoy unchangeable tranquillity.

**F I N I S.**

# A T A B L E

## Of the Chapters.

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The

*The communication of Doctour Thaulerus  
with a poor begger; wherein is compre-  
hended the example of a perfect man,  
and how we should resigne our selves in  
all things unto the good pleasure of God.*

**T**Here was on a time a great Divine,  
who prayed unto God the space of eight  
years, that it might be his good pleasure to  
direct him to a man that might instruct  
and teach him the true way of virtue : and  
it happened being his desire, that he heard  
a voice from heaven which said unto him,  
Go unto such a Church porch, and there  
thou shalt find a man, he will instruct thee  
in the spirituall life. He walking thither  
toward the said Church found a poor beg-  
ger, who had his feet filthy, foul, and all na-  
ked, whose clothes were not worth a half-  
penny, and he saluted him in this sort;  
God give you good morrow my friend :  
The poor man answered him, Sir, I do  
not remember that ever I had an evil mor-  
row. The Doctour said unto him, God  
give you a good and happy life. Wherefore  
say you that, quoth the beggar unto him,  
for I was never unhappy ? Which the Do-  
ctour not understanding, said unto him  
again, God blesse you my friend, I pray  
you speak what you mean. Then the poor  
beggar answered him, Good master Do-  
ctour,

& our, I shall do it willingly : you know  
 you bade me good morrow, whereunto I  
 replied, that I had never any ill morrow;  
 for when I have hunger, I praise God; if  
 it freez, hail, snow, rain, be it fair or foul,  
 I give praise to God; though I be poor,  
 miserable, and despised on earth, I give  
 thanks unto God, and therefore I never  
 had any evil morrow. You did wish unto  
 me also a good and happy life, whereunto  
 I made you answer, that I was never un-  
 fortunate, because I have learned alwayes  
 to resigne my self unto the will of God;  
 being certain that all his works cannot be  
 but very good, by reason whereof all that  
 happeneth unto me by his permission, be it  
 prosperity, adversity, sweet, or sower, I re-  
 ceive it as from his own hand, with great  
 joy and comfort; and therefore I was ne-  
 ver unfortunate, for I never desired any  
 thing but the good pleasure of God.  
 Which the poor man having said, the  
 Doctour answered, But what would you  
 say if God damn you? If God would  
 damn me, said the poor man? verily if he  
 would use me so hardly, I have two arms  
 to embrace him; the one whereof is a pro-  
 found humility, by the which I am united  
 unto his holy humanity; the other is love  
 and charity, which joyneth mee unto his  
 Divinity, by which I would embrace him  
 in

in such sort, that he should be constrained to descend with me into hel, & I had rather without comparison be in hell with God, then without him in Paradise. The Doctor learned in this communication, that a true resignation, accompanied with profound humility of heart, is the shortest way to attain unto the love of God. After that he asked of him again from whence he came: Unto whom he made answer, that God had sent him. The Doctor inquired yet of him, where he had found God? I found him (quoth he) so soon as I had renounced all creatures. And where didst thou leave him, replied the Doctor? I left him answered the beggar, with the poor, and cleane of heart, and amongst men of good will. But who art thou, my friend, quoth the Divine unto him? The poor man made him answer, that he was a King: and he asking him where his Kingdome was; It is, quoth he, in my soul, for I can so well rule and govern my senses, as well outward as inward, that all my affections and passions do obey unto reason; which Kingdome is without doubt more excellent then all the Kingdomes of this world. Moreover the foresaid Doctor demanded of him, who it was that had brought him into so great perfection? It was silence, answered the poor man, and my

my high and lofty meditations, and the union which I had with God: I could take no repose nor comfort in any creature of the world; by means whereof I found out my God, who will comfort me world without end. Amen.

*Laus Deo.*



*FINIS.*

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